

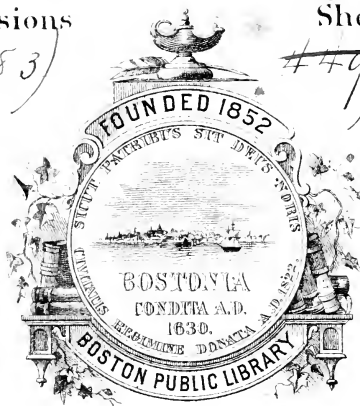


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FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING:

A

CHRISTMAS, NEW YEAR,

AND

BIRTHDAY PRESENT,

FOR

MDCCCXLVIII.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY PHILLIPS AND SAMPSON.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE annual approach of Christmas brings with it the publication of this, the ninth volume of FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.

In returning thanks for the unvarying patronage extended towards it, the publishers feel happy in the assurance that the present volume will fully maintain the established reputation of the series, both in relation to its literary and artistic merits. They therefore tender to the readers the compliments of the season, in the full confidence that the customary renewal of old acquaintance will prove equally agreeable to all the parties interested.

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FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.

CANOVA'S DANCING GIRL REPOSING.

THE lyre is hushed—the chorus of sweet voices, to which thy nimble feet kept measured cadence, ceased with thy last bound on the now deserted stage. Yet pulses of soft harmony, though the gross air stirs not in sympathy, vibrate in memory still. Music still trembles on brow, cheek and eye—the poetry of motion hangs like a veil around the waving fulness of that voluptuously reposing form. It is not rest, that the great master has embodied there, but action frozen into marble. The passing shadow of a thought, seized as the loud applause of thousands fell scarce heeded on thy ear—the shadow of a painful thought flitting athwart the blaze of pleasure's sunshine—sits throned eternally upon thy lip, in all the living death of stone. And what that thought? Poor instrument and victim of the public mirth; it

says too truly, "What have I to do with joy?" Can feast and song, and all the flattery of the giddy throng, repay thee for the loss of calm domestic bliss? How thy young heart is panting for a something which thou canst not name. Love, the sole solace of our weary lives,—Love, whose bright smile reflects within our souls the light of that far heaven whose God is love—lies faintly struggling in thy bosom; the hand of his sworn foe, Ambition, grasps his tender throat, and his weak gasping cry, just heard amid the clangour of Fame's trumpet, warns thee, alas, in vain! Ambition claims his victim, and it is too late.

Man lives for thousands, and his mission lies where multitudes award the wreath of fame or glory; but what doth woman there? Her happiness is centered upon one—the soft down of her purity brooks not the breathing of a thousand breaths. 'Tis well the master hardened thee to stone ere that slight fleeting shadow passed away. Poor victim of society, it was thy last appeal for human sympathy, and it shall make that sympathy enduring as is the hills.

THE FAIRY AND THE FLIRT.

A N I R I S H L E G E N D.

BY MISS M. A. BROWNE.

OF all the pretty girls that bloomed, fresh and fair as wild flowers, among the woods and hills of Kerry, there was not one to compare with Minney Lane. Others might boast of features more regular, of figures more dignified, yet Minney, with her laughing blue eyes, and showers of golden hair, her dimpled cheeks, and her round light form, her gay voice, and her glad ringing laugh, was felt and acknowledged by all to be the beauty of the parish. It was in vain that Mistress Biddy Coolan (a lady of a certain age, the terror of her neighbourhood) averred that Minney was the idlest, giddiest girl in Kerry, and would “never be a credit to her people, they might depend upon it.” It was in vain that Miss Abbey M'Deary, a personage similarly endowed with the gift of prophecy, declared that though “Minney Lane might be well enough liked by the boys, she never would bring one of them to the *pint* ;” meaning thereby that she

would never have that desirable thing, a real offer of marriage. Minney laughed, flirted, and flourished, in spite of such prognostics, and at length seemed "seriously to incline" to favour the addresses of young Philip Macarthy, a considerable farmer in the neighbourhood. The gentleman had the advantage of his pretty sweetheart by some eight or nine years, a handsome (Irish) fortune, and a clear and vigorous understanding; yet, as he was the beau of the parish, wherein she reigned the belle, the match certainly was a suitable one.

Now, Minney Lane, amidst her many winning qualities, had one fault—alas! where shall we look for perfection?—she was a *flirt*, in the fullest sense of that comprehensive word. Hers were not mere flirtations of an hour or a day; I believe in the beginning of each she really fancied she had a great regard for her unlucky victim, which made her after-coldness ten times harder to bear. She always appeared for a time to be utterly devoted to the favourite of the day; sang the songs he liked best; arranged her hair in the way he deemed most becoming; watched impatiently for his approach; and then, some fine day, on his arrival, he would find all these symptoms of regard gone. Her eye still bright, but not for him, new songs on her lips, new taste in her dress, betrayed an utter and cruel change. Yet Minney Lane was not wilfully malicious, she was only fickle.

Philip Macarthy had caused Minney to feel for the

first time those shadowy fears that ever attend real attachment. He maintained over her a greater ascendancy and for a longer time, than any one had ever done before. The little giddy girl, jesting with the true and deep feelings of those around her, as utterly unconscious of their worth as a child of the value of the watch it pulls to pieces in sport, was changed into the seeming of a true and affectionate woman, under the influence of his honest and manly love. She durst not treat Philip Macarthy as she had done others; she actually stood in awe of him. Why Philip, with his good sense and penetration, should have been attracted by the mere prettiness and liveliness of my heroine, is a problem which wiser heads than mine must solve. The fact is, that he *did* love her—deeply and fondly—perhaps upon the principle that extremes meet; perhaps because he was self-flattered with the idea of triumphing over her nature by his own, and fixing the changeable one, who had eluded the grasp of so many. Thus matters went on for some months, when Philip formally avowed his attachment, and, after a few coquettish evasions on the part of Minney, which the grave earnestness of her lover immediately put aside, a full consent was joyfully given by her relatives, and their engagement became publicly known.

For some two or three weeks after this important matter was settled, Minney seemed a different being. Her step was slower and more dignified, her eye was

meeker in its bright gladness, and she had few words or smiles for any but her betrothed. Indeed, she did not put herself much in the way of others, for she kept from dances and revels, and, of course, her disappointed admirers were not very anxious to visit her under her present circumstances. Anybody who had seen her seated just within her father's door, with the deep but glad thought of a young bride flitting over her brow, and her fingers industriously employed on a knitted stocking, intended for Philip, would unhesitatingly have pronounced her one who was bidding fair to falsify such predictions as those of the worthy dames alluded to at the commencement of this story.

So time went on, and Philip passed his days between joy and sorrow, between the home of his betrothed and that of his widowed mother, where, indeed, there was cause for sadness, for one very dear to Philip, dear even as a sister, was pining and fading before his eyes. Mary O'Neile was a relation of Philip's mother, as they make out relationships in Ireland. She was the child of a sister of Mrs. Macarthy's first husband, so that, though no actual tie of blood subsisted between them, Philip had always called her his cousin, and treated her with the affection of a near kinsman. Mary's mother died when her child was but a few months old; her father soon followed his wife to the grave, and the orphan, a sickly, fragile creature, was taken home by Mrs. Macar-

thy, then married to her second husband, with very little hope of doing more than smoothing her passage to the tomb. Kindness and care, however, had their due effect. The babe improved from the day on which she was adopted by the Macarthy's; and, though the delicacy of her constitution gave a paleness to her cheek, and an air of premature thoughtfulness to her mild eyes, Mary O'Neile at seventeen seemed as likely to live long as any girl in the parish. Soon after this period, however, she exhibited symptoms of declining health; and just when Philip was rejoicing in the consciousness of being beloved by Minney Lane, his dream was sadly interrupted by the illness of that dear friend who certainly occupied the second place in his heart.

But Macarthy never imagined that he had any share in producing Mary's illness. He never suspected that the dreamy and lonely girl, exempted by her delicate health from the household employments which usually occupy the time of maidens of her class, sate or wandered through her many leisure hours absorbed in dreams of which he was the pervading spirit, until he had become a part of her very existence. He never thought that the wild flowers he had gathered for her in his morning ramble, and the few lines he had written home during some temporary absence, were treasured by that pale orphan as though they were the title-deeds

by which she claimed a right to continue an inhabitant of earth.

The present danger went by, and Mary rose from her couch of sickness, but the faint rose-tinge, which the care of so many years had nursed into something like the hue of health, seemed faded from her cheek for ever. She grew more silent and reserved than her wont, more addicted to solitary rambles and lonely vigils; and often, when the veil of slumber was on every eye around her, Mary O'Neile sate at her window, too restless to sleep, too wrapt in the reveries of her own sad heart to seek the delusive solace of a dream.

About a mile from Philip Macarthy's farm was a very curious and beautiful spot, known as the Glen of the Waters, and so named from its peculiarities. No one passing within a few hundred yards would have supposed that such a place existed near him; for all around seemed a plain divided into fields, and he would have imagined that the rush of the narrow but swift torrent through its bed was a delusion of his fancy, or at most the rustling of the dry fern upon the ditches. But those who dwelt near knew that, in the very midst of a field, hidden only by the upswelling of the green turf, they might stand and look down into a deep rift or chasm above a quarter of a mile in length, which actually had the appearance of the earth opening at their feet. The stream, which hurried through its depths, flowed out into

the Glen, and, rushing rapidly over the rough rocks in its bed, buried itself again under ground, after the manner of the English "Mole," nor reappeared until it joined a tributary of that finest of Irish rivers, the noble Shannon.

This wild and extraordinary spot was a favourite haunt of Mary O'Neile's. The dreamy rush of its waters harmonized well with the confused and mingled hopes and fears that passed through her mind. And in latter days she had sought it constantly in her rambles, for its voice seemed to her sad heart as the voice of an unchanged friend.

It was on a beautiful evening in the midst of June, that Mary O'Neile, with a grieved and desolate heart, walked towards the Glen of the Waters. That morning she had heard that the wedding-day of Philip and Minney was fixed; and, resigned and calm as she had tried to be, the certainty of her desolation had never before come over her mind with such reality. She sate down in her accustomed place, from which she could see the rivulet rushing and foaming along its uneven channel, and then losing itself in the dark earth. The sun was dropping behind the far-off hills, and all was still, save the eternal sound of the waters, and the occasional cry of the corn-crake from the fields around. And when the cloudless sunset was past, the moon arose clear and beautiful; her broad yellow disk gradually lessening and bright-

ening as she sailed higher and higher into that delicious and dewy sky, and flooded all the scene with her silver glory. Still Mary O'Neile continued gazing on the waters, unheeding the flight of time, and soothed into calmness of spirit by the softness of the light and the cool breath of the evening wind, as it flowed over her burning forehead.

It was getting late : the last red light had died in the west, and the little bird had twittered the last confused and broken notes of its vesper hymn from its quiet nest, before Mary O'Neile thought of returning home. And, as she prepared to depart, her step was arrested and her ear entranced by the strange sound that arose suddenly around her. It was a peal of laughter, long, clear, continuous, yet too soft, too musical, to be the offspring of mortal mirth. It came from the air, from the earth, from the bushes. The very rush of the waters seemed blended and changed into it. The sky seemed overflowed with its melodious chime. It gushed out in clear musical peals, like the trilling song of the lark, and longer and louder, yet sweeter and sweeter, were its bursts ; whilst a voice, at once husky and high, was heard alternately grumbling and squeaking in the momentary lulls of that gale of merriment. The evening wind had arisen, and chased some tiny clouds up the sky, making swiftly-flitting shadows on the green fields. The face of the night was changed. From calm, almost

amounting to the hush of sleep, it seemed to have awakened to join in the revelry. The river had assumed a different appearance. Its trembling waters had no longer their uniform whiteness, but their foam swept along, tinged with all imaginable colours; as if the fountain from which the rainbow is drawn had broken loose, or all the rich gems in the heart of the earth had melted at once, and were flowing out through the Glen. Presently those bright colours gradually took shape and substance, and up from the depths of the Glen floated a multitude of tiny beings, so beautifully robed in the richest hues, that at a little distance they might have passed for a flight of humming-birds. And, as they came nearer to the bank, and alighted about the thorn bush where Mary had just been sitting, she perceived that theirs was the laughter which had rung so sweetly around her.

Ever since Mary O'Neile was a child, the belief in such beings had been impressed upon her mind; therefore, she was not so much surprised and alarmed at their appearance as you or I should probably have been. So, though she might be a little startled at first, she soon overcame her fear, especially as the fairies did not seem to notice her presence; and she resolved to remain where she was, and see what they could possibly want at the old thorn tree.

She was not long left in doubt. The troop of elves

were dancing in circles in high glee around some object which Mary could not at first distinguish. But still a little voice, now high in wrath, now grumbling in hopeless displeasure, came piercing through the silvery laughter; and Mary soon saw that the cause of all this mirth was a little miserable-looking old fairy, in a very ancient snuff-coloured coat, white silk pantaloons, a bag wig, and a cocked hat, who appeared in a great passion. He quivered, and stamped, and foamed with rage, which expressions of annoyance only elicited redoubled peals of laughter from his fair tormentors, for I should have premised that all the elves were feminine, with the exception of one mischievous-looking urchin in a page's dress of pea-green silk, trimmed with silver, who seemed as full of spite and merriment as any woman of them all. Meanwhile, some elves of an inferior grade placed a little ivory chair, draped with crimson, beneath the thorn tree, and a fairy of graceful and dignified aspect, attended by ushers and pages, advanced towards it, and seated herself. At her presence the troop of merry-makers smothered their laughter as well as they were able, and looked exceedingly pretty and demure. The object of their mirth, smoothing his brow while he was evidently swelling with passion, advanced from the throng, and stood before the Princess Gossamer, who scrutinized him with a very unpromising sort of countenance.

“Sir Aspenleaf,” she said, “you are brought here on a grave charge, and I am sorry that my damsels should have behaved in so unseemly a manner as to make that a matter for jesting which deserves severe reprehension. As ambassador from the court of our royal cousin and tutor to his hopeful son,” (here the page made a laughable grimace, which it was lucky for him the Princess did not see,) “we received you with a kindness and attention seldom bestowed on strangers, unless they be of the highest rank. We received you with honour and in perfect good faith; what has been our reward? That you have presumed to speak of love, nay, of marriage—marriage! Sir Aspenleaf—to the young Princess Althea, of whose youth we are guardian. Do not speak yet, sir, I have not done. I pass over your presumption in the matter of the glove which dropped from your bosom—Althea’s glove, Sir Aspenleaf,” (here the poor old man gave a sort of brick-dust coloured blush, accompanied with a deep sigh,) “I pass over the impertinence of uniformly engaging her hand for every dance at our festivals; but, Sir Aspenleaf, you spoke to her of love, you pressed her to forget her duty, her rank, her kingdom; you proposed a private marriage, an elopement—unheard of wickedness! What have you to say in answer to these charges?”

“I—I—your Highness!—if I may be believed—if I only may speak!”

“Say on,” said the lady, waving her hand with dignity.

“Why then, madam, if I had not thought—that is, if the Princess Althea had not said—if I had not supposed—Confound her!” he continued, bursting into a passion, “I do not think there is such another flirt in fairy-land, no, nor out of it, either.”

The laughter of the damsels could no longer be restrained; the Princess herself felt a certain agitation about the muscles of her mouth; and forth, into the space where the clear moonlight fell betwixt the parted boughs of the old thorn tree, glided a fairy figure whose exceeding beauty outdid all the rest, as a lily surpasses a bed of tulips. Her dress was somewhat fantastic, but nevertheless very becoming. She wore a rich bodice of gold, shaped from the beetle's wing, and a full petticoat of crimson swelled from beneath it in luxuriant folds. Her golden hair was gathered up in clustering wreaths and bound with a string of rubies; and her little feet, small even for a fairy, were clothed in tiny crimson slippers. There was half-suppressed mirth lurking about her mouth and in her clear blue eyes; and when she turned those eyes on Aspenleaf, he seemed ready to sink into the earth, whilst a most ridiculous expression of mingled anger and tenderness took possession of his countenance.

“I am here,” said a sweet, clear voice, “here to

confront my accuser—if I have an accuser; though wherein I have sinned I am yet ignorant;” and an arch smile played over her face in spite of herself, as she glanced towards the maidens, and again on the disconsolate Sir Aspenleaf.

“Ah! she’s a flirt, a thorough, shameless flirt!” groaned the poor knight. “There’s no depending on one of them. I’ve a great mind to wash my hands of the whole sex for ever and ever; the sixteenth time I’ve been jilted, too! Such a defence as I had prepared! and just when I was going to begin, in she comes and drives it all out of my head with a glance of her eyes. Well, I must submit to the decrees of fate!” And, so saying, Aspenleaf wrung his hands with a despairing air, and sat down on a stone, a true personification of the “knight of the rueful countenance.”

“You have failed in your defence, Sir Aspenleaf,” said the Princess Gossamer sternly; “at the mere presence of the lady you would slander you are silenced. Your sentence is, that you be excluded from fairy-land for a year and a day, and that on your return you be married to a wife of our own choosing, unless you can bring with you a bride from amongst mortals, transformed to our likeness by the spells you wot of. Farewell; may your next wooing be more prosperous!” The Princess arose, she waved her hand, and the whole

court vanished, leaving poor Aspenleaf sitting on the stone, the very image of despair:

Perhaps Mary O'Neile in her happier days might have laughed heartily at the predicament of poor Aspenleaf, but now she very nearly cried. She had a cord of sympathy, though a slender one, uniting her heart to his, and her feelings went at once through the crust of circumstances, and did not stop till they came to the simple fact, that he loved and was not loved again. She had heard it was not lucky to converse with such beings, but the little creature seemed so full of sorrow that Mary resolved to speak to him, in spite of his strange appearance. She approached him for this purpose, and he spared her the awkwardness of addressing him by speaking first.

"Ay, Mary O'Neile," he said in a sorrowful tone, "we are both of us greatly to be pitied this night, I think; in love, and neither of us loved again. I've almost sworn in my heart to make war with all women, be they fairies or be they mortals, for ever. But you are an exception; a true-hearted girl you are, who has never had but the one love, and loved him through all. There's some comfort in discoverin' the like of you, and though I'd be long sorry to trouble you, indeed, Mary *machree*, you could show me kindness if you would."

"What do you require of me?" asked Mary, a little flurried, for—to confess the honest truth, she was but

a woman after all!—she did not know but he might be for marrying *her* and taking *her* back to fairy-land. “Tell me what you would have before I promise.”

“’Tis nothing that you might either be afeard to do, or ashamed to own, *acuishla*,” answered the little man; “’tis only to come here sometimes in the soft moonlight, and let me see your pale face, for you *are* pale to-night, Mary, and let me feel that there is one kind, true woman in the world, that will do a kind action for its own sake.” And Mary promised, for love and pity are ever companions in a woman’s heart.

“An’ so, Philip, you really would hinder me going to the fair of Clonacarty, and having my own bit of pleasure, just because you’re going to Cork about the characters of them Rooneys and can’t go with me yourself. It’s very quare of you, and, if you’re so anxious I should not go without you, why do you go to Cork at all? What are the Rooneys to you, I wonder?”

“Oh, Minney, didn’t Kitty Rooney nurse my poor ould mother through the fever, and catch it herself after? and did not Jemmy walk ten miles to fetch home Father Maguire when we thought she was dying that same time? You wouldn’t have me be ungrateful, surely?”

“Well, I’m not saying agen them—only I know it’s very hard to be hindered of the fair, and all my new things come home, and very hard to be looked cross at,

and—ho, och ho!”—and Minney’s vexed spirit found relief in a copious flood of tears.

Philip’s brow darkened. He was exceedingly annoyed, and a little angry. He had promised some time before to take Minney to this very fair, and he now found he must be absent in Cork to bear witness for the good character of some neighbours who, in the common phrase of the country, were “in throuble,” and who, guilty or innocent, had shown much kindness to him and his. And, though he would not own to himself the true spring of the feeling, he had a strong and jealous aversion to Minney’s appearing in public unattended by him. He did not distrust her love, but he was not quite so confident of her discretion. Philip Macarthy was in general tolerably clear-sighted, but at present he was too much in love to see and appreciate the exceeding inconvenience of a wife whom he did not like to trust out of his sight. He knew Minney’s high spirit, however, and he did not insist on her compliance with his wish.

He merely said, “Well, Minney, don’t sob, don’t cry so, there’s a good girl. I’ll lave it entirely to yourself—I’ll not ask you to promise. But I do believe that when I’m far away you won’t do what’s not pleasing to me, but you shan’t promise;” and at that minute Minney felt as if she could give up the fair with pleasure, only she didn’t like to be “hectorred over.” She

dried her tears, and looked up into Philip's face so brightly, that he forgot and forgave her little waywardness in a moment. It was their first disagreement, and it ended as such quarrels usually do.

Nothing more was said about the fair, which was to take place the next day but one; and, on the following morning, Philip set out for Cork, hoping, nay, believing, that Minney loved him too dearly to act in opposition to his expressed wish.

The morning of the fair day rose, as bright and beautiful as the dawn of a rural revel should be. Minney awaked early from a very pleasant dream about Philip; and when she remembered the fair, she felt quite persuaded that she did not care about it, and that she would rather please Philip than go to fifty fairs.

Parties of neighbours soon began to pass, and not a few who called in expressed unbounded surprise at Minney's intention of remaining at home. She, meanwhile, to strengthen her resolution, kept her fingers and eyes most diligently engaged on sundry pieces of needlework, which Philip had asked her to do for him some days before, but which hitherto had been neglected.

At length she felt tired; her eyes ached over her work as they had never done before. She went into her own room, (Minney had the rare privilege of an *own room*, a little three-cornered nook partitioned from the kitchen,) and took out the gay-coloured dress which

had been prepared for the occasion. And then she thought she would just slip it on, to see if anything could be done to alter the *siz* of the sleeve, of which Philip did not quite approve. Then she heard somebody enter the kitchen, looked out, and saw only her old friend, Alice Sweeny, and immediately came forth to greet her. Alice admired the new gown amazingly.

"It's made so very genteel, Minney, and it's such a pretty thing," she exclaimed, taking hold of the sleeve, "there won't be the pair of it in Clonacarty this day; and when you've the blue silk handkerchy, and the new cap wid the blue ribbon on you, you'll be the perfect moral of a lady."

"But I'm going to take off the gown directly, Alice," said Minney—"and neither cap nor handkerchy shall I wear this day," she continued, sighing, as she cast a glance at the bright sunshine and blue sky without doors.

"Why, you'd never go in your ould cloak, Minney, and such an illigant new gown to the fore! You'd never be such a *nagur*, surely!"

"Why, then, Alice, if I went you might be sure I'd go dacint any way, but you see, *nagur* or not I'm not going at all."

"Not going, Minney! Was ever heard the like o' that? Well, that passes all! and so many of your ould bachelors there consoling themselves that they'll have

one more dance with the purtiest maid in Kerry, at all events. And myself heard Stephen Kempe say that Mickie Loney had come all the way from Knockabarraty, just for one more look at you before you're married! But, oh sure! I forgot; Misther Philip MacCarthy's away to Cork, and Miss Minney Lane must not stir unless she's pinned to his coat sleeve! hand an' glove, like."

"*Must* not stir, Alice!" said Minney, reddening. "I hope you don't mane to suppose that Philip has any command over me that way. He only asked as a favour."

"Oh, as to *that*," replied Alice, "you know, if he had not forbid it, you wouldn't be sitting moping your soul out all by yerself, when everybody else is away on enjoying themselves. Indeed, Minney," pursued the girl, "I think it is downright cruel and selfish in him, just because he can't go himself, to be hindering another this way."

"Philip did not wish to hinder me, Alice," said Minney, in a vexed tone; "he only said he'd as soon I did not go without him, but he left it with me entirely, and tould me to plase myself."

"Ah, then, he's jealous, Minney, that's the truth of it. If it was *me* now, I'd cure him of that same in time. Och! is it *I* would marry a man who was afear'd to let me look at a merry-making without him! Fine

times to you, Minney Lane, and a fine prospect you have for yer life. Well, I must be wishin' you good day. It's not Miles Fagan would want to chate me out of the fair, though he *is* gone with the masther to Dublin, and I thank my stars for it!" With these words Alice Sweeny rose to depart: "Well, I'll not fail to tell our friends *beyant*, when they are asking one another for purty Minney Lane, how I found her with a willow bough in her hand, and the tears in her eyes, frettin' after Phil 'Carty, like a good, dutiful wife that is to be."

"Stop, Alice," cried Minney; "don't go and make a song and a may-game of me through the town. As the day's so fine, I'll just walk down with you, and back again directly, so then nobody can say I haven't been; and I shall tell Philip I only went down for half an hour, and he can't be so unreasonnable as to be displased at that." So Minney gathered up her rich hair beneath the new cap, and covered her fair bosom with the blue silk handkerchief before mentioned, and (alas, for woman's resolutions!) set forth to the fair with Alice Sweeny.

Very gay was the town of Clonacarty that day. Groups of country people were seen pouring in from all quarters. Here a *spartheen*, or country beau, arrayed in light green coat with gilt buttons, leather inexpressibles, and top boots, and mounted on a tall, raw-boned horse, would dash suddenly through the crowded

street, to the infinite terror and admiration of the females there assembled. There a bevy of pretty country lasses, attired in long blue cloth cloaks, and gay printed gowns, their shining hair braided smoothly beneath the high white cap which generally forms the gala headdress of the south of Ireland peasantess, might be heard exchanging greetings, or passing sly sarcasms on *the boys*, as they came within hearing.

In another part, a knot of elderly and middle-aged men, in loose great coats, red check handkerchiefs, gray stockings, and stout brogues, each holding his *alpeen* loosely in his hand, discussing the price of corn, the merits of horses, and the state of political affairs, while the white-headed *boccogh*, or beggar, evidently a dozen years older than the oldest of the group, was appealed to on every questionable point, and heard with that deference which, in Ireland, perhaps more than in any other country, is paid to "length of days." The booths were full of dancers, and diverse were the tunes that came echoing from them, and mingling with the laughter and shouts of the revellers. Yet was that mingling not discordant, for the clear sunshine seemed on this day to blend all things into harmony.

Minney Lane enjoyed the scene at first with something of the tremulous delight of a schoolboy who has been persuaded to play truant in order to join some birds'-nesting expedition. By and by, she was coaxed into

one of the tents where Alice Sweeny was going to dance, just to look on for five minutes—"and what harm?" Then Mr. Simon Lane, the exciseman, a married man and her distant relation, prevailed on her just to take one dance with him. And, when Minney looked up at the conclusion of her dance, she beheld a pair of bright black eyes riveted on her with an expression of admiration, which made her look down again and blush. Presently afterwards, the owner of the eyes stood by her side, and in a very rich and musical voice entreated her to be his partner. Minney was confused. She stammered a half refusal. She felt she was doing very wrong in not returning home. Before she could frame a distinct reply, the stranger had drawn her hand into his own, and she stood with him in the middle of the floor. That dance was long remembered by those who saw it. So beautiful an exhibition had never before been witnessed in Clonacarty. The stranger was very handsome, so was Minney. The stranger danced exquisitely, so did Minney; and on this occasion it seemed as if her feet flew and twinkled less by the guidance of her own will than by that of some magical power.

When the dance was over, the unknown led his pretty partner to her seat, and from that moment Minney seemed to forget her fears, her pangs of conscience, and the flight of time. Evening came, and twilight deepened into night, yet still the sounds of revelry were heard

louder than ever in Clonacarty, and still did Minney dance, and smile, and talk with the handsome stranger.

It happened that the trial of the Rooneys had come on late in the day on which Philip Macarthy arrived in Cork, so that he was enabled to return in the afternoon of the next, pleasing himself with the idea that he should be home in time to take Minney down to the fair for an hour or two, so that she would not entirely lose her pleasure after all. He passed rapidly through Clonacarty, never pausing even to speak to his friends, and went by the door of the very booth where Minney was dancing, little dreaming, poor fellow, how little regard she had paid to his wishes. But he found her not at home, and was told by a lame old woman, the sole remaining occupant of the cottage, that Minney had set out some hours before for the town, in company with Alice Sweeny. I cannot describe the flood of disappointment and mortification that rushed at once over the lover's heart. The delusion was gone. He had flattered himself that the little capricious belle had been subdued by love into a faithful and yielding woman, and he now found that he had no real ascendancy over her natural disposition. He was far too proud to return to the town, or seek Minney's cottage again that evening. He went straight to his own home, and it was late on the following morning before he presented himself before Minney.

Their meeting was, as might have been expected,

anything but a pleasant one. Neither spoke of the previous day, for Minney felt perfectly sure that Philip knew and disapproved of her proceedings, and Philip did not choose to let her see the extent of his annoyance. He left her very soon, and did not even speak of taking their usual evening walk ; and, when he was gone, Minney sat down and wept bitterly. She was startled in the midst of her grief by a step on the threshold, and the handsome stranger of the preceding day stood before her.

I need not detail their conversation. It was interesting to none but the parties concerned. In fact, it was the frivolous talk of a born flirt with a handsome admirer—the said flirt imagining herself, all the time, to be extremely ill-used by her own accepted lover, and feeling a certain gratification in receiving the homage of somebody else.

Meanwhile, Philip Macarthy's tenderness had, in a great measure, vanquished his anger ; and, as the sloping beams of the setting sun touched the moss on Minney's cottage, till it seemed roofed with living emerald, he bent his steps towards it, fully determined on effecting a full reconciliation, if it could be done without very much compromising his own dignity.

He paused, for he heard voices within the cottage ; the flute-like voice of his own Minney, and her sweet, ringing laugh gushing out in reply to the low, thrilling

tones of the stranger. He stole towards the window, and there he beheld Minney in earnest conversation with a tall, handsome youth; and she was blushing, and smiling, and laughing, just as she had done for him in the earlier days of his courtship.

Philip gave one deep, bitter groan, and turned away. It was certain that Minney heard him, for the laugh died on her lips, and she grew deadly pale, but before she could reach the door of the cottage there was no one to be seen.

And where was Philip? He cared not where he went so that it was not home. He could not now bear that home which he had pictured as hers, which he had decorated for her, where he had dreamed of her by night and thought of her by day, and imaged her light form flitting through the rooms, and her sweet voice making melody to his heart. He could not bear to look upon the garden, where they had walked and sate together, and gathered fruits and flowers. His soul seemed smitten with a sudden blight, and he wandered recklessly on, until he found himself near the Glen of the Waters.

Twilight was rapidly descending on the scene. It was a starry, but moonless night, and the foaming waters of the stream rushed through their dusky bed like an unearthly thing. Philip stood on the brink of the chasm, and there was a wild whirl in his brain,

and fierce madness at his heart. He seemed to have an irresistible attraction towards those rushing waters—he looked on high—he spread forth his arms—he almost plunged into the Glen. He was arrested. A light flashed before his eyes—a shrill whistle sounded in his ears; and, on a slender branch that overhung the chasm, he perceived a little, quaint-looking old man, who bestrode the swaying bough, with as much ease as a practised rider sits a skittish horse.

“So, so, Philip Macarthy!” cried he, in a small, husky, yet shrill voice, something like the screech of a child’s tin trumpet. “Tired of your life, eh? Well, well, a jilt of a sweetheart’s a terrible thing in a first disappointment, but when you come to the sixteenth, like your humble servant, you’ll be used to the thing, and not so ready to fling yourself away, I warrant you! Time and patience, time and patience, man, are great soft’ners of one’s troubles; so just walk back with yourself to a safe distance, and I’ll come and talk to you.”

The bewildered Philip obeyed mechanically, and seated himself by the thorn bush. The little man perched himself beside him on a tall thistle, (from which his little legs dangled after the manner of a small boy’s from a counting-house stool,) and thus harangued him.

“You are an ill-used young man, Philip Macarthy, and there’s no use in denyin’ it. Your sweetheart is a fickle, giddy baggage, worse than ever a woman in

fairy-land, and they are bad enough, in all conscience. I've been tossed, like a shuttlecock, from one to the other for the last seven hundred years, therefore I've good reason to know them. Yet, after all, Minney's a purty creature, and if a man could nail her once she'd be worth the holding ever after; but this you're not the man to do, and this I tell you as a friend. Her head's full of the chap you saw *discoorsin'* her just now, and it's my opinion *he's* the boy for her. Ah! if she had but half the dacency of little Mary O'Neile!"

"Mary O'Neile!" exclaimed Philip, "my own dear cousin Mary! Tell me what do you know of her?"

"That she's the kindest, truest-hearted girl in the four quarters of the world, Philip. Many a time has she come here in the late evening to comfort me, a disconsolate crathur, who had nobody else to speak a word to; and many is the bit of honeycomb and drop of crame she has brought with her, ever after she found I had nothing to eat but sour blackberries and dry grass seed."

And then he told Philip his history, and how he was turned out of fairy-land, and how he met with Mary, and that he would surely marry her himself if she would have him, only that she was too good for him, to say nothing of her loving another better.

Well, time went on, and it began to be rumoured that the match between Philip and Minney was broken

off, and that shortly she was to become Mrs. Frederick Flowerdew; that being the name of the handsome stranger. He had never ceased to visit her daily since the fair, and rested not till he obtained her consent to be his wife. He lived in grand lodgings in Clonacarty—had always plenty of money, and gave Minney a variety of expensive things, amongst others a fine gold watch and seals, and a beautiful shawl, and a silk gown, and a smart beaver hat, with a feather and a veil. So, of course, most people thought she would be wise to take him whilst she could get him; though there *were* some, envious of her luck, no doubt, who said they would not have him if he were ten times as rich and handsome as he was. There was a queer look about him, especially about the eyes; and as to Frederick Flowerdew—was *that* a Christian-like name? Did ever anybody hear of an Irishman with such a name in his life? Notwithstanding all this, the preparations for the wedding went on. Minney seemed even more devoted to the stranger than she had been to Philip. She had no eyes or ears for anybody, save him to whom she was so soon to be united.

As to poor Philip, he was in a most pitiable condition. He had no consolation one way or the other. He had not been deceived in Minney—he had not the comfort of imagining that she had appeared to him either wiser or truer than she really was. She was a flirt, and he

knew it, and had loved her notwithstanding. He had gone into the snare with his eyes open—he was the dupe of his own imagination. Had his attachment been founded on any peculiar quality, or any semblance of excellence, which had now departed, he might proudly have consoled himself with the thought that Minney had artfully assumed “a virtue, though she had it not,” to entrap him. But no—she was still unchanged, save in her regard for him. She was as pretty, as good-humoured, as bewitching as ever, and that was all she had ever been.

Time passed away, and brought, in its course, a bright sunny morning, which was fixed for the marriage of Minney Lane. Surely never bride looked more beautiful than Minney, in her white dress, and the large lace veil, the gift of her bridegroom, which was the only covering she wore on her bright hair. The bridal party approached the chapel, where the rite was to be performed, and Minney, leaning on the arm of her lover, advanced towards the threshold. At that moment she turned very pale, and, clinging to the arm of Frederick, uttered a faint cry, and hid her eyes.

A well-known form had passed, and now stood by the chapel door. It was Philip Macarthy. “Minney,” said he, in a voice tremulous with emotion, “Minney, you are rushing on your ruin—I come to save you.”

But Minney answered not; and Mr. Frederick Flower-

dew, putting a very valiant look on a very pale countenance, requested to know the reason of that person's interference, at the same time expressing his readiness to give any sort of *satisfaction* that might be required of him, as soon as the ceremony should be over.

"As soon as that wretched girl's misery is sealed!" exclaimed Philip. "No, no, I fight not with such as thee, deceiver as thou art! I use not earthly weapons against an unearthly enemy. Here is my test of thy truth, my proof of thy falsehood," he continued; and, dipping his hand into the holy water by the chapel door, he sprinkled a few drops on the bridegroom.

The effect was instantaneous. A change came over the false youth's appearance. The rich hair withered and turned to a few scanty locks of gray; the lips quivered and paled; the whole form contracted and sank; and the gay and gallant Frederick Flowerdew was transformed into a dwarfish and wrinkled being, in whose countenance shame struggled powerfully with the rage that flashed from his fiery eye.

Dreadful was the confusion that ensued. The crowd of spectators, for the most part, took to their heels and fled. The priest retreated to the altar, and began to repeat the exorcism for a fiend at the full stretch of his lungs, and Minney fainted away. Immediately there arose a strain of wild, sweet music; and, preceded by the fairest of her maidens, and drawn by milk-white

butterflies, in her car of pearl, the beautiful queen of the fairies came gliding from the shadow of a willow, and paused at the spot where the abashed Sir Aspenleaf stood trembling and almost crying.

“So, Sir suitor,” said the queen, in her most scornful tone, “are you *now* cured of your arrogance? Are you at last convinced of the utter absurdity of making love on your own account to either mortal or fay? But come,” she continued, “you shall not want for a bride. Here, Lady Squintilla, I would not willingly give him a flirt; he has had enough of them, one would think; and your mature years and staid deportment will doubtless be a check upon his follies.”

“Well,” said poor Sir Aspenleaf, shrugging his shoulders, “I was always a fatalist; and, after all, *any* wife is better than *none* to a gentleman in his seventeenth disappointment!”

The queen joined the hands of her exiled knight and her mature duenna, scowled on the half-recovered Minney, looked pityingly on Philip, and bestowed one of her sweetest smiles on Mary O’Neile; and then the fairy pageant melted away into the summer sunshine.

Our chronicle here is at an end. It does not speak farther of the fates either of the mortals or fairies involved in the legend. But from another source we have learnt some facts, which appear to be connected there-

with. Some twenty years from the date of these events, a substantial farmer, named Philip Macarthy, was living in great prosperity in the very district where the scene of our story is laid. His domestic affairs were superintended by a still lovely wife, a placid and happy being, who bore the gentle name of Mary. And in the town of Clonacarty, some two miles distant, resided a maiden lady, of whom report said she had been lovely, but whose evanescent beauty had now vanished beyond recall. She resided in a tall, narrow house, with green door and brass knocker, having come to live there on unexpectedly succeeding to a small independent property, left her by a distant relative. To these circumstances she probably owed the change in her designation from *Minney* to Miss Maria Lane.

Furthermore, report saith that a strange little figure, in a cocked hat, might sometimes be seen, when the moon was bright on the borders of the Glen of the Waters, wandering about in a disconsolate manner, or sitting weeping in hopeless dejection. Sometimes his sorrow found words, and those who had seen and heard him declared that he had very much the air and voice of a henpecked husband. If these cannot be identified with the persons of our legend, we have no further record of the fate of either the Fairy or the Flirt.





THE CAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "REVERIES OF THE SANCTUM."

VERY gentle is the glance of thy quiet eye, fair girl. There is a shadow on thy young cheek, it is true, for the world has not been kind to thee, but that shadow dims not, while tempering the joyous light of youth, beaming around thee from a soul yet uncorroded by the serious evils of existence. That thou hast known thy share of such afflictions is plainly seen in that half melancholy look ; but they have passed thee by unmeasured and unweighed, while floating down the tide of life's young river, purpled and gilded over by the sunlight smile of Hope. They have been to thee like the mists of a bright spring morning ; tearful, but loveliest in tears.

The world has not been kind to thee. We see this in the simple neatness of that humble garb, and the plain kerchief tied beneath the chin ; we see it in the steady but unconscious movement of that practised hand, plying the needle with a monotonous and weary drudgery, while the mind wanders far away. Plainness of attire is a

necessity with thee, and not a taste :—the needle is thy support and not a pastime. Is it not strange, poor victim of oppression, that thou shouldst still be cheerful, hopeful and resigned!

Day by day thy morning path leads thee to some mansion of the wealthy, where seated in a corner, neglected and unnoticed, thy eye rests in its half dreamy musing upon the rich and varied appliances of luxury in which there is no part for thee. Steadily, stitch by stitch, thy task drags on unmarked by any except, perhaps, when the cramped bosom heaves an unconscious sigh, and the proud mother turns, wondering, to hear the sound of human feeling from a source so humble.

Then comes the “fitting” and the “trying on,” the querulous and stinging rudeness of pert ill-educated misses, the “pshaw” and “did you ever” which reward thy patient toil in the vain effort to remove by art, defects impressed by nature or fostered by the vices of a false refinement.

’Tis dinner-time. If aristocratic pride allow thee a seat at the familiar board, free from the insult of the separate side table, the lonely nursery meal, or the degrading associations of the servants’ hall (alas, for the variety of rank and caste that marks republican equality!) how cold, and sad, and solitary, is thy station in the crowd! Heiress of supernumerary slices, and rejected remnants of superfluous dainties, no cheerful tone or glance

lightens the keen sensation that thou art an intruder there; no kind maternal word relieves thee from the broad impertinent stare of the tall college youth, thy employer's eldest-born, proud, in the dignity of half-fledged manhood and expected wealth, to prove his "budding valour" on the unprotected; as the young hawk tests upon harmless flies the terrors of his formidable beak, ere yet his fluttering wings have strength to tempt the air in the pursuit of nobler game.

To evils such as these, long habit has inured thee; but the night! How often during the weary day, the dread of its dark shadows, curtaining the nameless scenes of the vast capital, comes over thee like a cloud!

The weary day is passed. Long lines of brilliant lamps illuminate the principal streets; darkly, on either hand, gap the more straitened avenues that lead to the residences of the poor.

With the light shawl drawn tightly round the collarless neck, hands crossed upon the breast, the deep calash burying the low-bowed head, the body curving to conceal those charms of form which nature gave as woman's chief boast and attraction, thy little feet patter and glance along the pavement, revealing at every step the graces that would shun the vulgar gaze, and drawing upon thee constantly, those very eyes which it is thy chief desire to shun. How thy heart trembles at each passing footstep beating its dull alarm drum on thy ear,

lest one should pause or turn or speak, as thy path swerves, now here, now there. to avoid each whiskered fop or boisterous boy, whose eye is *felt*, not *seen*, as it bends rudely on thee! How happy when some staid old citizen, marching with magisterial gait and air of self-possessed authority, allows thee, for a moment, to check thy speed and steal along all noiselessly between him and the wall, somewhat in rear, but near enough to check impertinence by the semblance of protection.

At length, the narrow lane which leads to thy humble home presents its friendly gloom. With what a thrill of joy thy figure straightens to its proper height; thy arms are suddenly unclasped, thy springing feet bound to the well-known entrance and up the three long flights of darkened stairs. I hear the quick slam of the attic door, the sudden fling into that worn old chair, the long, long breath that says the chase is o'er, the hawks are foiled, the dove has found its nest, the bird is safely caged!

And is it true, that innocence unsheltered is thus unpitied by its own and persecuted by the other sex? Reader—male or female—look into thy own heart; open the casket of memory; consult the records of experience: then answer as thou canst. If thou hast never been an oppressor, come to me, and I will wear thee in my heart of hearts. There is room there for all such that live, and yet 'twill not be crowded.

The bird is in its cage. In that old chair, beside that quaint old table, once sat a venerable woman. She was the grandmother of her whose weary toil now wins a precarious existence by the needle. She was surrounded by all the appliances of wealth, in the good old golden ante-revolutionary days; but no son of hers asked of the humble, "Who is thy protector?" no daughter drew a tear-drop from the eyes of a dependant. The morals she instilled were godlike morals, for they were versions of God's own inspiration. They knew no bounds of race or of condition; he who respects not persons ruled that venerable human heart, and its wide sympathies embraced mankind. Dost thou now wonder, worldly reader, why, oppressed and hunted, the object of neglect and vile suspicion, with every innocent word misjudged, though springing from ignorance of that society from which low pride and haughty cruelty debar her—dost thou wonder that a calm, though slightly saddened peace, still sits upon the cheek of that poor girl, as in the quiet morning she turns from her unending task to gaze upon her fellow-prisoners there—her only living friends? Shall the God that "visiteth the sins of the parents upon the children, even unto the third generation," debar the virtues of a like descent? The unpractised linnets in that little cage were not less safe among yon vultures defiling the pure skies with their unhallowed wings, than she, that prisoned dove, with

thee and thine, when lured beyond the narrow meshes which thou and such as thee have woven around her ; yet there dwells within her soul a glorious inheritance, richer than all thy gold ; lifting her up above the sordid pride of wealth or station, high as that lonely attic, from which she looks forth into heaven, and mirrors back its purity from her benevolent and gentle eyes, above the city's pride, and the unwholesome breath of gay saloons. Say, shall the prophet speak ? There is a Providence that looks on pride ! Thy wealth shall melt away, thou man who frownest upon humble virtue ; to thee it is a curse—thy children, ruin ! Thy children's children, where are they ? They shall be like to her in poverty, but mark ! “ He visiteth the sins of the parents upon the children, even to the third generation.” Shall they, then, pay the penalty, alone, of their iniquity entailed by thee ? Eternal justice answers sternly, No ! These things are as I say. Though neither old nor gray, yet have I seen them with my eyes.

Enough then, for the proud ; and now one parting word for thee, meek, gentle dweller by the burning eaves. I have wandered from boyhood among the haunts of misery and despair. The deathbed of the stranger, and the outrage and oppression of the poor have been with me familiar things. I have called upon the rich in aid of the distressed. The many gave me eloquent words and flattering promises, some too from ample stores have

given a little gold, but few, how very few, have wakened to the voice of genuine human sympathy. On thee and such as thee I never called in vain. Out of thy nothingness, thy gifts have outweighed the gifts of plenty. Have I not seen thee hunger that others might be fed? Thy time, which was thy all, has been lavished to relieve a misery but too well known to thee, in thy own cheerless loft. The dying eyes of the forsaken have looked up to thee from thy supporting bosom, to wonder, and to bless thee; the little fatherless prattler has shared thy couch of straw, and scanty meal, unconscious of the boon. But thou, forsooth, knowest little of the laws that mould to natural and untutored eloquence, the untrimmed expression of thy heart's warm glow. Thy song, sweet, clear and ringing as the voice of the wild wood-thrush, apes not Italian art or German training. Thy feet, light as the hoof of the gazelle, know not the measured stateliness of the whirling waltz. Poor girl; thou art not *presentable*; and thy very graces, lacking the stiffness of prescriptive rule, make thee more dangerous to the chosen few. Look then to heaven for thy companionship. Thou livest too near the angels for a world like this.

Poor persecuted child! I have bowed in the halls of princes—I have stood among the shattered columns of palaces and temples—I have mused among the ruins of forgotten races, and echoed from my deepest heart the

hollow voice of Time, crying beneath the crumbling arch
“Ha, ha!” to human greatness. I have learned to
know no higher rank than the proud title of the species,
Man—the image of his God! And, by that rule I
honour thee, despising those who trample on thy rights.
Cast, then, thy faults upon society, and place thy trust
in heaven. May my hope yet to meet thee there, be
brighter than their hope!

A MATCH OF AFFECTION.

BY MRS. ABDY.

WELL, my daughter is married, the popular prints
Are full of her blushes, her blonde, and her beauty,
And my intimate friends drop me delicate hints,
That my poor timid girl is a victim to duty :
They talk about interest, mammon, and pride,
And the evils attending a worldly connexion ;
How little they know the warm heart of the bride !
She always was bent on a Match of Affection.

Dear girl, when implored her fond lover to hear,
At the mention of settlements how was she troubled !
Sir Nicholas offered two thousand a-year,
But she would not say yes, till the income was doubled :
Still she clung to her home, still her eyelids were wet,
But the sight of the diamonds removed her dejection ;
They were brilliant in lustre, and stylishly set,
And she sighed her consent to a Match of Affection.

I really want language the goods to set forth,
That my love-stricken Emma has gained by her marriage,—

A mansion in London, a seat in the North,
A service of plate, and a separate carriage :
On her visiting list countless fashionists stand :
Her wardrobe may challenge Parisian inspection ;
A box at the opera waits her command.
What comforts abound in a Match of Affection !

Some thought Captain Courtly had won her young heart ;

He certainly haunted our parties last season :
Encouragement, also, she seemed to impart,
But sober and quiet esteem was the reason ;
When wooed to become a rich Baronet's wife,
The Captain received a decided rejection,
“She should hope as a friend to retain him through life,
But she just had agreed to a Match of Affection.”

Some say that Sir Nicholas owns to threescore,
That he only exists amidst quarrels and clamour ;
That he lets his five sisters live friendless and poor,
That he never hears reason, and never speaks grammar !

But wild are the freaks of the little blind god,
His arrows oft fly in a slanting direction ;
And dear Emma, though many her taste may deem odd,
Would have died had we thwarted her Match of Af-
fection.

ELLEN MALDEN.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL, ESQ.

THE evening was rough and stormy, when Ellen Malden, having filled her basket with trifling purchases, left the village of Hurst for the cottage of her aunt, three miles distant. Widow Ellis, her sole remaining relative, had seen better days; and, though now reduced to comparative poverty, retained the esteem and good-will of all who had known her in happier times; while the neighbours readily placed their children at the little day-school which, assisted by her niece, she had respectably conducted since unforeseen circumstances had plunged her into difficulties that were sustained by her with pious submission, but neither inertly nor hopelessly; for, a life of blameless and active Christianity had taught her to see the hand of One “who doth not willingly afflict,” in all that had befallen her. Ellen had been detained at Hurst, and not till the swift-falling shadows of a surly October evening began to gather around, did she reach the solitary combe that stretched behind the cottage of her aunt.

A good, as well as a pretty girl was Ellen Malden. The naturally amiable and right-thinking tone of her mind, fortified alike by early precept and example, had acquired from the society of Mrs. Ellis, on whose bounty the decease of her parents had cast her in her childhood, a bent and energy superior to her station. Yet, with an intellect more highly cultivated than her companions could boast, she was free from all assumption; and, wisely concealing her own sense of the advantages which she had derived from nature and circumstances, she excited neither envy nor aversion.

Propriety, modesty, and discretion marked her conduct; and, though she had many admirers, Ellen had no suitors in her own walk of life, while she prudently avoided any enticement of accident that might lead her into the society of her superiors. But, alas! she had soon the misfortune to attract the attentions of a young gentleman of property in the neighbourhood, who had more than once offended her unaffected delicacy by the ostentatious proffer of gifts, which were invariably rejected, by fulsome and flattering speeches, which were never heeded, and, latterly, by repeated attempts to intrude on her moments of solitude. These trespasses on her quiet created great alarm in the mind of Ellen; nor was her aunt free from apprehensions, lest the conduct of Mr. Bligh should draw upon their humble but

hitherto respected names the obloquy that *sometimes* attaches even to the most spotless innocence.

Mr. Bligh was a handsome man, with an unhandsome mind. The fashionable world had infected him with its very worst vulgarities of folly ; and, mixing in its most corrupt and heartless circles, he had imbibed their deepest poison. A sceptic in the existence of chastity, he boldly avowed his belief that all men and women “ had their price ;” the former he considered as knaves or fools, the latter as fair and willing game. With such a creed, he attributed the loathing abhorrence with which Ellen received his fulsome addresses to nothing but art and coquetry ; and he only grumbled that so mere a country chit should exact what he deemed an undue share of his exertions before he could prevail on her to own herself his slave.

The combe through which Ellen was now passing with a quick step, lay near the house of Mr. Bligh, and her heart beat with accelerated motion, as, suddenly, a greyhound crossed her path, and, in a moment, before she could retire or advance, Bligh himself stood before her. It is not consistent with the plan of this little sketch to repeat the fallacious arguments which the proud and presumptuous libertine made use of to beguile Ellen to his purposes. The specious sophistry which so often fills the pages of our modern love tales, in the misapplied eloquence of their choicest heroes, shall not

be imitated by us. Long, and subtly, and ardently he pleaded; but he pleaded in vain: for his auditress, weak and trembling as she stood in the presence of a strong and wicked man, was powerful in the fortitude of a pure heart; and, as she repulsed him with disgustful horror, she breathed a prayer to Him who alone could aid her—nor was that prayer unheeded. In the heart of the libertine disappointed passion frequently prompts violence. A rude hand was stretched towards Ellen—her loud shriek rang echoing through the hills—and, as she fell senseless on the ground, a faint idea of coming rescue was blended with the horrible terror that caused her to swoon.

When she recovered her senses, she found herself supported, tenderly, but delicately, by a gentleman, for such the soft pressure of his small and ringed fingers and his kind and polished address denoted him. The increased darkness prevented her from scanning his features; but, as he soothed her excessive apprehensions by the assurance that her insulter had fled, she learned that her scream had reached him where he stood on a rising ground, not far from the scene of her rencontre with Mr. Bligh, and that he arrived just as she fell fainting to the earth.

“I had this stout cudgel,” said the unknown, “and the villain has tasted its vigour.”

Directed by the grateful girl, who was still too much

agitated to walk unassisted, he led her to the cottage, where her aunt, anxiously expecting her, and alarmed by her long absence, received her with kind caresses, in her darling's preserver recognising Burnett Walton, the only son of an ancient but impoverished family, who, after an absence of several years with his regiment abroad, had recently returned to visit his parents, and, for the first time, had seen the niece of his old acquaintance, Widow Ellis.

Thus they met—thus they saw each other ; thus, seeing each other, they came to love each other : and who may dare to analyze the process by which love works its strange marvels on the human heart ! There is no bitterer evil than to place our affections on some bright, “particular star,” whose sphere we have no privilege to aspire at reaching ; and Ellen and Widow Ellis, and even Burnett himself, were not long blind to the disparity in birth and station that precluded all hopes of a union between them, save at such a price as none of them permitted their judgments to reflect upon. Yet day after day saw Burnett Walton at the cottage of Widow Ellis : there was a partridge he had shot, a basket of fruit he had gathered, or a nosegay he had culled, for Ellen ; and so unassuming were his attentions, so perfectly free from aught that could offend the most scrupulous delicacy, that the words which were

always ready to fall from their tongues to prohibit his visits still remained unuttered.

At length he spoke his love, and then did the humbled widow perceive her error; and, while she blamed herself, she solemnly entreated him to renounce, at once and for ever, a passion that could not end otherwise than fatally. "He, who had saved her darling from the insults of a ruffian's arms, would *he* endanger the peace, the reputation, the eternal happiness of an innocent and lowly maiden, whose birth and station rendered her alike unworthy of his *honourable* affection? and a *dishonourable* feeling—oh!" (she implored him,) "to harbour no thought so degrading to the noble and high-souled race from which he had sprung!"

Mr. Bligh, meanwhile, baffled in his attempts, and, perhaps, ashamed of the chastisement which Captain Walton had inflicted, and to which his cowardly nature had sullenly submitted, had suddenly left the country, and was now remembered by our lovers merely as the cause of their first interview. Alas! that interview had been to them fraught with fate!

Burnett Walton was no seducer, but he was young, ardent, and romantic. Ellen, humbly born, in poverty, working for her daily bread—though educated above her station, and possessing a heart that would confer dignity on any rank—was still unfit to be the bride of the last scion of a noble house! What was to be done!

Alas ! the heart that hesitates on the brink of Error, has already advanced a step into the prohibited territories of crime !

It was a glowing summer's eve. In a sheltered nook, amidst the woodlands that environed the cottage, two youthful forms were seen in earnest conversation. In tears—the tears of a yielding heart—Ellen Malden reclined on the shoulder of her tempter. She who hates the seducer has no merit in withstanding the seduction, and thus Bligh had failed to shake her virtue. It is she who loves, who idolizes the being that would selfishly mislead her, yet who resists, that is truly worthy ; and Ellen Malden *did* resist, till, affrighted by the passionate vehemence of her lover's grief, she burst into tears, and sank on his shoulder.

“Nay,” he cried, “if you love me, Ellen, you will be mine. It is true that, were we now to wed, my parents would cast me off for ever. But a short season of concealment, and all would be well. Consent to be mine, fly with me, and”

“Oh ! Mr. Walton,” said she, “would you, *could* you, cruelly let me live with you unwedded ?”

“If you love me, Ellen, you will confide in me ! Come, dearest, come with me !”

Ellen gazed on him for a moment dreamily, almost wildly. She raised his hand to her lips, kissed it fondly,

and, at once and suddenly relinquishing it, turned from him. She neither fled, nor fainted, nor shrieked ; but, falling on her knees on the greensward, she prayed loudly and fervently to the Almighty to “save her ! save her from the man who tempted her ; above all, to save her from her *own heart* !”

Walton beheld the kneeling innocence before him with a new and singular emotion. A sensation of admiration, mingled with a sort of awe, crept over him, that purified every wild and wayward thought ; and a strange sight might have met the eyes of a wanderer at that moment, amidst these woodlands, for the young soldier flung himself on his knees beside that kneeling maiden, and, shrouding his face in his hands, also prayed for that strength to subdue evil, which no human being possesses, save from Heaven ! Were their prayers heard ?—They were ! In a short space of time, those lovers—*now* how truly lovers !—rising from their knees, looked upon each other again. A sweet and holy serenity shed a beauty, almost unearthly, on the delicate features of Ellen, as she met the sorrowful yet chastened glances that spoke the rebuked spirit of her beloved.

“God bless you !” she whispered. “We must part. We *must* !”

“Be it so, Ellen !”

He drew her towards him—she resisted not. He pressed one long and pure kiss on her cheek, which she

withdrew not from that innocent pressure, and then, without another word or look, he turned from her and fled That night Ellen shed many tears, but they were not embittered by remorse. She prayed, and, though at moments she had sorrow, still she found peace! In a few days the virtuous cottagers were told that Captain Walton had sailed for India, having succeeded in effecting an exchange into a regiment recently ordered thither.

Many years—some five or six—have passed since Burnett Walton and Ellen Malden were parted. There are partings where the farewell words are rainbowed over with the skyey hues of hope, and where the tears that accompany the sobbed-out adieu are glistening with the unconscious light of expectation; but such was not the case with Ellen. There were no hopes, for reason told her of the fallacy of such, in circumstances so entirely opposed to a reunion as to have shaken the imaginings of the most sanguine dreamer. Such circumstances attended her separation from Walton; but, if hope refused to lend a roseate colour to the dark shadows of her disappointment, a consciousness of having fulfilled her duty, of having taught him she most loved on earth to imitate her sacrifice of all selfish feeling, spread a gentle and consoling influence over her reflections; so that her aunt had not the cares of her

age embittered by beholding the sinking frame, the paling cheek, the mind that weakly succumbs to bootless sorrow, for Ellen wrestled, not manfully nor unfeelingly but like a feeling yet a Christian girl, with the emotions that told her how strongly she loved the being from whom she believed herself separated for ever.

From time to time, chance brought them intelligence of Captain Walton's welfare in the East Indies, of his gallant bearing on several occasions, of his promotion, and, finally, of his approaching nuptials with a wealthy lady of that country. Who shall say what Ellen's feelings were on these occasions ! It is useless to deny that even our most desperate fears may end in a certainty still more desperate ; and, unawares to herself, it is likely that Ellen may have dreamt a romantic dream, not of a union with Walton, but of two severed hearts, living for ever far apart, yet living true to each other, unwooing and unwedding elsewhere. We love the memories of our loves, even when we cease to love the objects of them ; how fondly, then, must we treasure such memories, when the objects continue to be loved—continue to be regarded with a passionate affection, subdued, it is true, by religion and a sense of duty, still as strong as the purity and truthfulness of a young, and innocent, and ardent nature can make it ! She suffered—and her aunt (now almost entirely confined to her room from the increasing ailments of age and infirmity)

saw that she suffered. But time passed : and, though the rose did at last wax fainter on the cheek of Ellen, and the smile was seldomer seen upon her lips, none guessed the cause. She was still the same gentle, obliging, industrious girl she had ever been ; never unoccupied, for she knew the salutary power which occupation exerts over the busy-thoughted mind ; and the additional avocations which the failing faculties of Mrs. Ellis compelled her to exercise were of use in weaning her from contemplations, the indulgence of which could not be otherwise than hurtful.

But misfortunes, not the less trying that they were wholly unexpected, fell upon them. The banker, in whose hands the money was deposited from which Widow Ellis drew her small income, suddenly became bankrupt, and decamped, leaving many destitute. Mrs. Ellis had now only her scholars, and the little dress-making work which had been Ellen's business, to look to as a means of livelihood. Her own health no longer enabled her to attend to the former, so that the duties of the school also devolved entirely upon her niece. The neighbours were, however, kind, and such kindness became more needful as time passed by.

Mr. Bligh had, meanwhile, returned to Combe Wood, a married man, but had been two years a widower before Ellen and he met. When they *did* meet, there was no symptom of recognition to excite apprehension of further

persecution ; and, although he bore no favourable character in the neighbourhood, nothing so decidedly bad as to render him more than an unpopular man was known ; so that the events of former years were almost forgotten at the cottage, when an incident occurred to recall them.

Ellen had seen her aunt to bed one summer evening, and, at her earnest desire, sallied out to take a short ramble. It was one of those beautiful evenings in June when the sultry heat of day, yielding to the approaching coolness of night, leaves, as it were, an atmosphere of repose over creation. Shunning the common tracks about the hamlet near which stood the cottage, Ellen pursued a path that led over some waste land to the Hurst road ; and, worn out as she felt by the exertions and confinement of the day, she experienced the soothing influence of the exercise, the solitude, the universal quiet, while her heart bounded with almost the buoyant enjoyment of youth, as she passed along scenes that, ten years before, had beheld her a gay and happy girl of sixteen. The birds were fluttering home to their nests, the bats were flitting abroad to their quest, gnats were humming in the air, and that air was enriched by the breath of a furze-copse near the pathway, whose every bush was loaded with blossom, from the golden mouths of which issued a steam of fragrance, rare and delicious. The petals of the purple vetch were folded up in sleep,

but, from the wild thyme that clustered thick around, a few sated bees lazily rose at the slight pressure of her foot ; and, coming to a little wood of birch and hazel, that divided her from the highway, not twenty yards from that spot where first she met the distant Walton, whose image even then was near to fancy's eye, she seated herself on a grassy hillock, and flung off her bonnet, the better to catch the cool summer air that wandered by, refreshing and delighting her with its freight of fragrant odours.

Her thoughts were busy with the past ; but a blameless life and a well-regulated mind had taught her that we should not send out the dove of Remembrance from the ark of Thought, to bring back cypress and yew ; and there were gentle and happy images floating over the tenderness that filled her eyes with quiet tears. We ought not to turn to the past as to a barren waste, but as to a field, where, though the reapers may have gathered harvests, the gleaners may still collect a sufficing aftermath of rich ears, sweet herbs, and new buds. And thus wisely did Ellen ponder on times that could not be recalled, and prayerfully consider "each misery she had missed as a new mercy."*

Suddenly a rustling of the leaves in the coppice behind her, and then a harsh, whispering voice, startled her from her abstraction.

* Izaak Walton.

“Be off with you, Judith!” it said; “bide for me at the Black Hill, and in half an hour I’ll be with you with a full purse. I watched him as he left the inn, and, when I begged for a penny, he scowled on me with his eye, and cursed me with his tongue. I’ll have my revenge, if I be hanged for it. Off with you!”

Breathless with terror, Ellen listened. She turned her head, but the bushes grew thick between her and the road, and she saw nothing, though, from the proximity of the sound, she knew that the voice proceeded from that part where the highway, leading beneath a slight acclivity, wound round the plantation. Scarcely knowing the extent of her fears, she was about to fly; but then the whispered menace struck upon her memory, and, with that unselfishness which was her strongest characteristic, she reflected on the possibility of averting evil, or baffling crime. To show herself, to argue with, no doubt, a desperate villain, would be madness; there were no houses nearer than the hamlet; and, as she was vainly endeavouring to summon her powers of thought as counsellors in a dilemma so perilous, the quick trot of an approaching steed struck upon her ear.

Springing upon her feet noiselessly and stealthily, she crept through the underwood to the road, and reached a point whence her knowledge of the locality had assured her she could watch the coming stranger and his foe. As she gained the last belt of bushes

which, fringing the summit of the acclivity, overlooked the road from Hurst, she perceived a gaunt, ferocious-looking man, in the ragged dress of a sailor, glide down to the highway, where he placed himself behind a slight projection of the bank, so as to come entirely within the scope of Ellen's vision, while he was hid from the sight of the rider, who advanced at a good pace. The sailor, if such he was, had no weapon in his hand, and she was rejoicing in the certainty that he was unarmed, when her eye caught sight of a huge bludgeon at her feet. It was his, for, at that very moment, evidently missing it, he looked around, as if to look for it, though without perceiving her as she crouched amongst the hazels, and muttered an oath, whilst at the same moment the sharp click of a pistol smote appallingly upon her ear. Her blood curdled, her whole frame seemed turned to ice, as the unconscious horseman drew near, and in another moment he was under the bank, not four yards beneath where she stood.

A strong and rude hand was on the horse's bridle, making the animal rear and tremble with the sudden fear of the nervous grasp; a rough voice demanded the rider's "purse or life!" and, at the same instant, she beheld a pistol in the hand of the assailant, while the horseman in vain endeavoured to spur on the terrified steed.

“Yield your money, at once, sir, or, by the Lord, you’re a dead man!”

“Never, villain!”

“Then may you be cursed eternally!”

And the pistol was glittering in the air, when Ellen, scarcely knowing what she did, raising the unwieldy bludgeon from her feet, flung it with all her force at the robber, uttering a piercing scream. The random blow, directed by a providential power, struck the pistol, which was harmlessly discharged as it fell from the hand of the astonished miscreant, who, terrified by the suddenness of the rescue, and conceiving himself surrounded by numbers, took to flight; whilst the horse, affrighted by the report of the pistol, galloped madly off, throwing his rider beneath the bank. In another moment, careless of consequences, so she could be of use, and even emboldened by her own daring, Ellen stooped over the prostrate man. It was Mr. Bligh.

It was not immediately that he recognised in his deliverer from probable assassination the form of Ellen Malden, for the severe pain of a dislocated shoulder made him so sick at heart, that he closed his eyes; but the touching tones of a pitying voice recalled him to a sense of his situation, and, with a strange feeling of shame and gratitude, he leaned upon her arm, as she helped to raise him from the earth. At that moment a good spirit seemed to have entered into his breast,

and he formed the resolution of making that woman his wife, whom, many years ago, he had in vain tempted to be his mistress. Advancing steps suggested the probability of the ruffian's return; but, before Ellen's apprehensions found vent in speech, they were relieved by the approach of several men returning from work on Mr. Bligh's grounds, and to them he related what had happened, sending one of them to Hurst for a surgeon, while two others accompanied Ellen to the cottage, and a couple more assisted him to Combe Wood.

With expressions of grateful admiration, so warm as to revive fears that had been long dormant in her breast, he parted from Ellen, who reached the cottage without interruption, but reached it to undergo a shock that almost overwhelmed her already overwrought faculties. Her aunt, speechless and apparently unconscious of any surrounding object, lay stretched on the bed, her eyes glazed, and her limbs lifeless with the chill of paralysis. It was fortunate for Ellen that she had been attended home by worthy John Browne and his son, for at that moment she felt that to have found herself quite alone would have almost maddened her. The father spoke words of comfort as he helped her to strike a light, and Ned was despatched to the nearest cottage, whence two of her pupils, well-grown and useful girls, were, with instant kindness, sent to her; whilst honest Ned ran on

to Combe Wood, to request that Dr. Renshaw would call at Widow Ellis's before he returned to Hurst.

Dr. Renshaw's opinion was, that sensibility might return for a time, but that perfect recovery was hopeless, though immediate death need not be apprehended; and the result justified his opinion. In a few days the widow regained speech and reason, but her limbs were as dead. Day after day witnessed the arrival at the cottage of some fresh comfort, whether of food, medicine, or other kindness, sent by Mr. Bligh, whose respectable old housekeeper frequently came to inquire after the cottagers, by the express desire of her master; and, at the end of a fortnight, Mr. Bligh himself called, requested to see Ellen, and at once made an offer of his hand and fortune. Now was Ellen's triumph complete; but she felt not the triumph. Her mind preoccupied by her aunt's dangerous situation, her heart filled with an absent object, her whole thoughts averse to a change of condition, she gently, but firmly rejected Mr. Bligh's addresses.

But he was not to be thus readily discouraged. Wanting that refinement of feeling which shrinks from bestowing attentions that are evidently unwelcome, he continued daily to call; and it was a new grief to Ellen that Mrs. Ellis appeared willing to forward his views. The good woman was prepared for death, and contented to die so that the future fate of her darling was insured

from destitution. She permitted her sick bed to be disturbed by terrors for the desolate condition of Ellen, and she would have rejoiced in beholding her wedded to Mr. Bligh, whose late honourable conduct had gone far in effacing from her recollection his former delinquency. We almost fear to think that the worthy old woman's grief was not very severe, when, soon afterwards, the heart of Ellen was sorely tried to hear of the death, in India, of Major Walton.

The whole neighbourhood seemed to enter with kindly sympathy into the sorrow of the bereaved and aged parents of the deceased, now left childless: and Ellen, in the utter privacy of her unshared grief, felt that indifference steal over her heart to earth and all its concerns, which is the most enduring proof of a cureless sorrow. She could have borne to hear of his marriage, so that happiness attended his wedded lot; but to die thus, afar from his home, his family—the thought drew bitter tears from her eyes; and, as day after day, week after week, continued to drag slowly on, whilst no change occurred to vary her lot, she felt her energies, her strength, gradually give way to her despondency, against which she vainly struggled. Four long months had thus passed, nor had the attentions of Mr. Bligh ceased to annoy her. At last, shaken by the mournful entreaties of her dying aunt, weakened by her failing health and worn-out spirits, the desolate Ellen gave an unwilling consent,

and, at the bedside of the rejoicing sufferer, she became the wedded wife of Mr. Bligh.

The Widow Ellis lived not to witness the wretchedness she had entailed on her darling.

There are stages in the heart's misery of such surpassing dreariness, that madness itself would be welcomed as a boon ! As the sod closed over the grave of her aunt, Ellen felt that on earth she had no friend ; and in the agony of the moment, unlike herself, she dared to forget that in Heaven, to which alone she should have looked, reigned an UNDYING ONE, who is ever able and willing to protect those who humbly and confidently seek to lean upon his arm.

Mr. Bligh, given up to every species of low vice, was a harsh and exacting husband ; and, although, from the very moment she consented to become his, she formed the resolution, from which she never flinched, to fulfil the duties of a wife in their very fullest sense with unswerving, unmurmuring strictness, she soon found that neither her submissive meekness, her earnest endeavours to *seem* (if not to *be*) cheerful, nor her ladylike deportment at the head of an establishment, each member of which loved to obey her, could check his evil propensities, or change a radically bad disposition. The first ardour of his passion for her over, he permitted his sensual nature to revel in the grossest debauchery, and,

before the end of the second year of her marriage, Ellen found herself in a position that moved the compassionating admiration, not only of the neighbourhood, but of her meanest dependant.

Some conduct highly ungentlemanly, on the part of Mr. Bligh, about this time, occurred to exclude him from the society of the neighbouring gentry, and, though Ellen retained the good opinion of all, she was of course compelled to renounce all companionship with that circle from which her husband was exiled. This coolness towards him he made the pretext for throwing open his doors to a set of dissipated and unprincipled men, of whom there are always enough to be found ready and willing to sit at the rich man's board, be his vices what they may. But Mr. Bligh's affairs, from constant neglect and the most lavish expenditure, were becoming involved to an alarming extent, and ruin stared him in the face; when Ellen, one day, perceiving that he was partially recovered from the fit of intoxication into which, for the preceding week, he had been plunged, fell on her knees before him, and besought him, with tears and endearments, to alter a course of life so full of sin, of discredit, of destruction. She implored him, at once and decidedly, to cast from him the parasite brood, whose precept and example had led him into evil courses, many of whom, seeing that difficulties were gathering round him, had already begun to treat him

with scorn and neglect; she entreated him to place his property and affairs in the hands of an honest man of business, and to spare her—his wife—the mother of his unborn babe—the disgraceful horrors that menaced his vices with the direst punishment.

A dreadful frown, a frightful imprecation, and an unmanly blow, stupified the soul and stunned the senses of his wretched wife. Cruel as his conduct had latterly been, he had never laid the cowardly hand of violence on her; and the stroke which prostrated her senseless at his feet, and which, in its consequences, seriously endangered her life, struck still more deeply on her soul than it wounded the tortured body.

The dread of having killed her, added to that scarcely pitiable despair which so frequently follows a fit of inebriety, evolved the germs of insanity lurking in the mind of Mr. Bligh; but it was not until a month after her recovery from the brink of the grave, that the benevolent Dr. Renshaw told her she was a widow. The unfortunate wretch had rushed, unsummoned, into the presence of his God, and was found suspended from a beam in an outhouse, on the day after his cruel treatment of his wife.

The following weeks were full of painful excitement to Ellen; but in Mr. Ryder, a worthy and clever man of business, and in the clergyman of Hurst and his family, she found kind friends, from whose counsel and

society she obtained that upholding consolation which she so much needed. Mr. Bligh's affairs were discovered to be in such confusion, as to render the sale of the whole property necessary; nor did more than a small annuity remain for his widow, who retired to a neat little cottage at Hurst, near the parsonage, where the family of the clergyman became her true and kind friends.

It was a singular chance that, soon after, made her acquainted with the aged mother of Burnett Walton. Mr. Walton's death had quickly followed the accounts of his son's decease; and his widow, bereft of husband and child, led a lonely but useful life at Walton Grove, within a mile of Hurst. Of a high and noble-minded race, Mrs. Walton was constitutionally shy and reserved; but sorrow, religion, and the genial nature of a heart originally kind, had humbled much of that pride which was hers by birthright, but which true piety, as well as true wisdom, discards as the most unseemly and worthless excrescence that can deform the human mind. Her beneficence to the poor was marked and judicious; and it was one morning, whilst Ellen was walking on the road that led to Walton Grove, that a fresh instance of the good lady's kindly nature brought her into contact with Mrs. Bligh. Turning an abrupt corner of the road, as it wound round a hill, Ellen came suddenly upon a group of three wretched objects. A woman, so

worn, so wasted, as to seem almost a phantom from the dead, was extended at the roadside, whilst two wailing children, the elder not four years old, scarcely covered from the nipping air of March by a few nauseous rags, lay beside her. An elderly lady, seemingly in great pain, sat on a stone near them, whilst her exclamations of anguish were, from time to time, mingled with words of comfort and assurances of speedy assistance to the greater sufferers beside her. Ellen instantly recognised Mrs. Walton, and, springing forward, offered the aid which she saw was necessary.

“Thank you, dear madam,” said Mrs. Walton, “thank you! if my pain would permit me, I would tell you how glad I am to make the acquaintance of Mrs. Bligh, even *thus*. I have sprained my ankle—badly, I fear. Forgetting how unbecoming it is for an old woman like me to skip over brooks, I too hastily stepped across this little ford, in order to inquire into the necessities of these poor creatures, and fell. I came out alone, and will indeed thankfully accept your offers. I cannot even stand; but the lodge is not a quarter of a mile hence, and, if you will have the kindness to extend your walk so far, you will find people there who will send my little pony-chaise for me.”

Ellen flew rather than ran; and, before many minutes were past, the venerable Mrs. Walton had given orders that every attention should be paid to the destitute woman

and her children, whilst she herself, conveyed home in her pony-chaise, was extended on a sofa in her own room, with Ellen, from whom she would take no refusal, sitting by her, until the arrival of Dr. Renshaw was announced. From that day began an intimacy between the two widows, which speedily ripened into sincere friendship, and was fraught with pleasantness to both parties. Ellen found in Mrs. Walton a refinement, a sensibility, a taste for literature, congenial to her own mind, but which she had never before encountered; whilst the old lady soon learned to love and appreciate Mrs. Bligh with a partiality almost maternal.

It was on one of those occasions, when the heart opens like a flower to the sunshine, that Mrs. Walton confided to her astonished listener her full cognizance of all that had occurred between her deceased son and Ellen.

“My noble boy,” she said, as she kissed the tears elicited by her narrative trickling down the pale cheek of her guest, “after he left England, had no secrets from his mother; and he *then* told me how *bravely*—bravely, my dear child!—you had acted, and how unalterably his heart still clung to you. I—proud, foolish old woman that I was!—I rejoiced in your separation, and knew not the full value of the heart that had so nobly withstood temptation, until your conduct as Mr. Bligh’s wife became the subject of everybody’s com-

mendation. Alas! would to Heaven that my darling Burnett had lived to make you indeed my daughter!"

Ellen wept on the shoulder of her venerable friend for a long time before she ventured to inquire whether Major Walton had not been betrothed to a lady abroad, some time before he died.

"Never!" cried Mrs. Walton, emphatically. "Such was indeed reported, but we cared not to refute it. Of his death we know little. In an action which ended fatally to the British interests, he fell, covered with wounds, but his body was never found!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Ellen, "may he not still live?"

"No," sighed the mother; "it is impossible! Such as were taken prisoners by the barbarous natives were said to have perished by cruel tortures, and the few that escaped had seen nothing of him. Nearly three years have passed since then—no! he is dead!"

"Merciful Heaven!" shrieked Ellen, as, starting to her feet, she pointed towards the large oriel window near which they sat, "behold his spirit!"

The aged Mrs. Walton, terrified by the scream, the action, and the words of Ellen, caught the fainting form of her guest in her arms, in time to prevent her from falling on the ground, and violently rung the bell. Assistance speedily came, and then it was that the old lady discerned symptoms of agitation on the counte-

nances of her old and faithful housekeeper and butler. Ellen's senses were soon recalled, but it was not before due precautions had been taken by the affectionate vassals, and the clergyman, who was quickly summoned, that either Mrs. Walton or her guest was informed that a stranger awaited their welcome—a stranger—no spectre, but Burnett Walton himself, alive and well!

What needs it to recount his release from captivity, and his return to his native land before even the accounts he had despatched home of his miraculous escape had reached England! What needs it to say more than that a happier mother than Mrs. Walton, as she saw her brave Burnett place the wedding-ring on the finger of Ellen Malden, smiled not in all merry England!





OUR COTTAGE HOME.

AN AMERICAN TALE OF EVERY-DAY LIFE.

GEORGE WASHINGTON WENTWORTH was one of the thousands of multifarious patronymics, who receive at birth, as a prefix, the name of one whom the whole family of man delighteth to honour as the type of true nobility and the loftiest virtues, not only of the human species, but also the most magnanimous tribes of brutes, and the most lifelike of inanimate machinery. George Washington Wentworth shared the historic honours of his name with ships and factories, slaves, bulls and horses. "*De gustibus*," &c., says the adage; so, I shall not attempt to question the propriety of these occasionally equivocal compliments to the greatest of men: we may rest contented with the confident assurance, that all such testimonials of remembrance are intended by parents, godfathers, merchants and masters, as proofs of genuine respect, and it is not amiss that a name engraved so deeply in the hearts of his countrymen should rise familiarly to the tongue, amid the prattle of childhood and the routine of domestic duty.

The question, "Who was George Washington?" can only be answered, in a treatise upon all that gives dignity to human character, and brightness to human hopes; the oftener it is asked and receives reply, the more rapidly will society approximate to that condition for which patriots sigh and Christians pray—the high condition for which God designed the race: but why this lofty name was bestowed on Mr. Wentworth, must be made to appear in the sequel. Certainly he was no hero, if heroism consist in slaughter, or courage in the battle-field: his father had been a soldier, but he was a man of peace. It is equally certain that he was no statesman, if it be necessary to establish such a title by going on a mission to foreign lands or by descending into Congress or the Presidency. Yet this namesake of the greatest of heroes was by no means deficient either in heroism or statesmanship, if these qualities can be shown by successful resistance to parental authority in the domestic instead of the national sense, or by resuscitating a lost estate, as well by sustaining the fortunes of a tottering realm. Those who have known how much more desperate, in many cases, is the stern contest of social life, than the fiercest struggles in the battle-field, may perhaps acknowledge that he was indeed a kind of Washington in his own humble way.

The father of Mr. Wentworth was a young bachelor of twenty-five, at the eventful moment when "the beal-

fires on a hundred hills," and the bells of a thousand churches, startled the drowsy night, and in one short hour spread, wide over the sovereignty of the old Bay State, the news of the march to Lexington. These sights and sounds reached him as the dawn of the morning began to spread a grayish tint over the dark summit of Mount Tom, as with twin brother of Holyoke he towered above the eastern and western ridges which bound the beautiful valley of the Connecticut. He was a minute man, one of that secret association to which the cause of American Liberty owed so much, in the "days that tried men's souls," though their very existence as a body of combined patriots is unknown to most of their lineal descendants. Too distant from the immediate scene of action to be a participator in the first glorious struggle, he was not the less prompt in mustering those of the neighbouring peasantry who had long been ready to defend the popular rights, whenever the gathering storm which hung suspended over the colonies should burst.

As captain of a motley crew of half-armed volunteers, the young farmer left the parental roof, with the parental blessing still ringing in his ears, and his memory haunted by the last look of his mother, as her tearful eye belied the sternness of a voice that said, untremblingly, "Abijah, do your duty!"

Throughout the war of the Revolution, he followed the

varying fortunes of the army, and imbibed, in common with all the genuine patriots, that deep veneration for the Father of his Country which has since diffused itself over every land where the name of liberty is known.

It is curious and interesting to observe the occasional influence of events and circumstances, usually considered as purely personal, and deemed by the grave historian as trivial, in influencing not only the character of the immediate actors, but even that of succeeding generations. Two incidents of this nature occurred to Abijah Wentworth at a very early period during his military career, the one engendering an ardent love, the other an equally enduring hate.

During the siege of Boston it was necessary to preserve a covert communication between the patriotic inhabitants of the city and their friends in the American camp, and notwithstanding the general currency of the libellous adage that woman cannot keep a secret, female ingenuity and quickness of perception were frequently employed in this dangerous service with the happiest results.

Near the American lines, in a small tenement, resided the wife and only daughter of one of the wealthy and highly-connected citizens of Boston, then an officer on duty in the camp, who had chosen that temporary retreat for the females of his household, in order that he might enjoy the gratification of occasional intercourse

with this most cherished society without neglecting the duties of his station. The notoriety attendant upon apparent wealth and station, in a situation so closely approximated to scenes of danger, was far from being desirable; and prudence induced the ladies to assume a garb and manner suited to their ostensible rank as cottagers upon a humble scale. This fact, coupled with the high intelligence of the parties and the appropriate location, induced the commander-in-chief sometimes to employ the cottage as a place of private consultation, or for the reception of secret information; the ladies, whose attachment to the colonial interests was not to be suspected, being unrestrained confidants in many important transactions, in which the younger was not unfrequently an active agent. On these occasions, when the husband and father was otherwise engaged, or when the duty in hand belonged more properly to a subordinate, Captain Wentworth was generally made the medium of communication between his commanding officer and the inmates of the cottage.

It is said that the tailor makes the man, and, by the same rule, it is to be supposed that the mantua-maker makes the woman. Had the young belle of Boston appeared before our rustic hero in all the magnificence of hoops and stays, it is more than probable that even Love, though he is sometimes sadly democratic in his taste, would have failed to break down the barriers

which inequality of wealth and station in society had raised between them ; but it would certainly be difficult for even the majestic Pallas to play the exclusive in a short-gown and petticoat. So it cannot be surprising to the reader to learn that by the aid of a community of interests and dangers, a common enthusiasm in a glorious cause, frequent association, and the natural affinity between nineteen and twenty-five, this young couple soon found their feelings enlisted for a term of service longer than the war. Had the father of the lady survived the terrible struggles that marked the infancy of liberty, perhaps the prejudices of birth and social position, matured by the indulgence of half a century, might have induced him *prudently* to check the natural current of young affection, and a match so unequal in the eyes of that small portion of humanity which styles itself the world, might never have been completed ; but Providence had ordered things differently. Colonel —— fell in the contest with Burgoyne, and Miss ——, the war being concluded, bestowed her aristocratic hand and ample fortune upon the farmer's boy. So much for the source of the ardent love of Mr. Abijah Wentworth ;—let us investigate the causes of his one enduring hate.

In the history of all just political revolutions, it will be observed that many worthy individuals are slow to perceive the necessity or even the propriety of changes

which the experience of after ages proves to have been not only wise, but even essential to that benevolent scheme of Providence by which the progress of humanity is effectually secured, in spite of human error. On such occasions the rash and the enthusiastic plunge into the vortex merely from love of action and of change ; the grave and patriotic, from that deep forecast of results which bears a close affinity to prophecy ; the sinister and calculating, on the contrary, usually adhere with pertinacity to the powers that be ; for those who lead the van in all improvements—the forlorn hope in the desperate assault upon the stronghold of established error—are sure to suffer. But there is another class of sober-minded men whose fate may be deplored, though it is inevitable. Not gifted with the second sight which marks the genuine statesman, the prophecy must be fulfilled before they read its purpose ; conscientious and morally timid, they doubt and hesitate until the time for action has gone by. In times of high excitement there is no recognition of neutrality, and such men are condemned alike by every party. Now it so happened that a gentleman of this description, of unobjectionable family connexions and most ample means, had been for several years an intimate acquaintance of the Colonel and his family. The prudent father had watched with natural pleasure the increasing favour with which his daughter seemed to view the visits of

this highly eligible individual ; but when the troubles that preceded the open rupture between the colonies and the parent country had substituted for the love of gold and station in his breast, the stronger love of freedom and his native land, he perceived with deep concern the lack of patriotic fervour in the tone of one whom he had fondly hoped some day to welcome as his son-in-law. Long and eloquently, in the unconscious frankness of girlhood, did his daughter endeavour to awaken in the bosom of Mr. Elliott, (for such was the name of this gentleman) a share of that enthusiastic patriotism which burned so brightly in her own ; but it was in vain. Censuring severely the folly of the ministerial policy which refused to extend to the colonies the political rights which they claimed as an inheritance from their fathers, he deprecated, in still severer terms, the attempt to defend those rights by force. As a necessary result of this conflict of opinion, a degree of coldness took place between Mr. Elliott and the family of the Colonel, and when, after the celebrated "tea party," the former ventured to denounce that independent exercise of the original sovereignty of the people as a riot, and the precursor of an open and avowed rebellion, that coldness was succeeded by a total estrangement.

After the first bloodshed in the streets of Boston, Mr. Elliott retired to Salem ; but still, a lingering attachment

which had never been really reciprocated, led him to wander, by night and unseen, about the residence of his former friends, like a lost Peri around the gates of Paradise. These visits were not entirely unknown to the Colonel, now rendered watchful by the increasing dangers of the times, nor was their purpose misunderstood by one who had been no novice in the tender passion. Love penetrates all disguises; and having by some means discovered the retreat of the ladies, after the investment of the city by the continental forces, he ventured on one occasion to approach the cottage; and what lover can refuse him his sympathy on hearing that his only motive was the hope to see the shadow on the grass, of that fair form which had cast an eternal shadow on his heart, as it passed to and fro between the window and the chamber lamp?

Unfortunately for him, it happened that, on that very evening, the immortal hero of the age, the Colonel, and the Captain were met in secret conclave, in the parlour; a corporal's guard was stationed in the little hall, and a sentinel patrolled before the door. As the now hopeless lover, in painful revery, stepped from the cover of a little grove upon the open lawn in front of the cottage, the cold calm starlight betrayed his figure, and he was hailed by the watchful sentinel. Startled and much surprised, he approached upon command, and was met by the officer of the guard, who, on hearing the challenge,

immediately advanced from the hall. Disconcerted and deeply embarrassed, he gave ambiguous replies and a feigned name in answer to the necessary queries, and the officer, placing him under guard, proceeded to report the occurrence to his superiors within.

“Bring him before us,” said the calm voice of the Father of his Country; “though there is nothing surprising in the presence of a stranger on these grounds, the reluctance to explain his purpose, and the propriety of extreme caution in relation to our present business, require that we should know more of the man and his intentions.”

Mr. Elliott was introduced between two of the guard, and his eye fell, and his cheek flushed, as he felt the cold gaze of his former friend, the Colonel.

“Your name?” said General Washington.

There was a pause, and Elliott visibly trembled. To answer truthfully would convict him of falsehood, on the evidence of the officer of the guard. To explain the cause of his prevarication it would be necessary to involve, indelicately, the name of a lady in the presence of her father. To return once more the name he had given to the sentinel, would lay him open to immediate contradiction by the Colonel!

“Your name, young man?” repeated the General, in a voice softened by the obvious distress of the prisoner, and

by that benevolence which, in him, tempered the sternness of the soldier and the inflexible rigidity of justice.

“If your Excellency will permit me,” said the Colonel, “I can perhaps explain the cause of this embarrassment better than Mr. Elliott himself. Though by no means friendly to the cause of his country, I am willing to pledge myself that he will commit no overt act of treason towards the cause of the colonies, and that he is incapable of enacting the part of a spy. For certain personal reasons which Mr. Elliott will appreciate, I would respectfully request that this explanation may be made in the absence of the guard.”

“Let the prisoner retire under guard until further orders,” said the General; and the door being closed, he turned his glance somewhat severely upon the Colonel, without speaking.

The officer thus addressed proceeded to give a hasty sketch of the character of Mr. Elliott, together with a short history of his acquaintance with the family of the Colonel, and the probable causes of his midnight wanderings. The narrative affected the two auditors in very different manners. As the countenance of the General gradually relaxed into a smile of humorous good nature, that of the Captain underwent many perturbations, and all of them of sinister import. The latter did not attract the attention of the unsuspecting Colonel, but Washington was too good a judge of human

nature to permit them to pass unheeded. Having given orders for the release of Mr. Elliott, he resumed his usual gravity, and said, musingly :

“Nevertheless, these malcontents must be carefully watched, or they may prove treacherous and dangerous to our cause :”—then, as if struck by a sudden thought, he added, “Captain Wentworth, you will be kind enough to inquire into the future conduct of Mr. Elliott, as far as you can conveniently make it a subject of observation, and report from time to time, to your commanding officer.”

It needed no special request to enforce this course of duty on the worthy Captain. The narrative of Colonel — had fully enlightened him as to the relation existing between the wealthy young royalist and the object of his ardent, but unavowed and almost hopeless love. Conscious of the vast inferiority of his claims as to wealth and education, the existence of such a rival, even though rejected on the score of his political views, was a source of inexpressible terror to the military farmer's boy. The dissensions of the times might yet be healed ; the opinions of the merchant might change ; in either case, the settlement of the family feud was almost sure to follow ; and, by a common sequence in affairs of the heart, this terror rapidly ripened into an enduring hate, not only of the person, but the very name of Elliott. Deep, very deep then was the satisfaction of the Captain,

when, nearly two weeks after the arrest, one of his men brought him the information that Mr. Elliott had disappeared, and that he was supposed to have joined himself with the royalist refugees in Nova Scotia.

Having thus explained both the love and hate of the farmer's boy, let us leap the twenty-six years intervening between this time and the third year of the present century.

Captain Abijah Wentworth was now a retired gentleman of wealth in the fine old city of Boston. He had made proposals to the daughter of the Colonel, and was accepted by the lady shortly before the evacuation of that city by the British; but a deep dread of the consequences of any appeal to the father on this subject was impressed upon the minds of both the parties. It was scarcely to be supposed that the obscure rustic from the West, with his bronzed complexion and his long natural curls, would be favourably regarded, in the light of a future son-in-law, by that rich and highly-connected citizen, proud of his family and purse, and prouder still, perhaps, of his sedulously powdered head, and his well-ordered queue. The attachment of the young lovers was therefore kept profoundly secret, until the Colonel fell amidst the shouts of victory, upon the bloody field of Saratoga;—nor was the marriage concluded until the surrender of Cornwallis put a period to the war; for,

what American woman of that glorious age would have received as a husband one recreant to his duty in the defence of infant Liberty and the service of his bleeding country ?

An only son had blessed the union of these two active patriots, and he was naturally named in honour of that wonderful man beneath whose eye the Captain had passed so many years of contest and of suffering. At the period to which our narrative has now arrived, this lad had entered his twenty-first year, and stood before the world, an amiable, gentle, and intelligent youth, dutiful to a proverb, even in a section of our country where the exercise of parental authority is often rigid to a fault ; but beneath this superficial veil of pliancy, there lay concealed the indomitable enterprise, the capacity for endurance, the instinct of activity, the undoubting self-dependence, the careless indifference in the selection of any professional pursuit provided it be profitable, and the constitutional foresight and shrewdness that mark the character of the young American. George Washington Wentworth had been nursed in the lap of luxury ; he had received a refined and finished education, and was heir-apparent, not only to the ample patrimony of his mother, but also the large accumulations of his father, gathered in the course of sixteen years industriously applied to trade ; yet he dreamed not of a life of mere enjoyment.

To be the architect of his own fortune, to be cast comparatively penniless upon the world at the age of twenty-one, however great the wealth of his progenitor may be, has been till recently the general fate of the New England lad, and George anticipated no exception in his favour. It is only after the boy has proved himself a man and needs no farther help, that the New England living parent usually offers him free access to what the world considers as the means of that success which has then been won without means. A strange philosophy, and yet, perhaps, as wise!

While local manners and peculiar institutions had been developing this model of a race the most active upon earth, like causes had produced a curious effect upon Abijah Wentworth. The farmer's boy, in marrying the child of the patrician Colonel, had fallen heir in right of his wife, as it appeared, not only to his property, but to his prejudices of birth, his high-toned aristocratic feelings, his powdered head and formidable length of queue:—Nay, more; he had enlarged prodigiously these several *virtues*; and now, the darling object of his life was to see “the child,”—that is, George Washington Wentworth, on the eve of his majority—married to some amiable young person whose family connexions were, as he was pleased to say, “equal to our own.”

But Love, who had smiled at the doctrine of equality

in matrimony in the father's case, and, sooth to say, had thereby promoted human happiness in spite of the prophetic doctrines of match-making mothers and prudent papas, facetiously resolved to vindicate the laws of prescriptive propriety and moral compensation by repeating the wrong in the case of the son, with the scales of justice reversed. The old gentleman had "married above himself," and the power that rules this species of elective attraction now determined that the young gentleman should "marry beneath himself."

One beautiful May-day afternoon, in 1803, George and a party of his young friends being on an excursion to the neighbouring town of Lynn, went out upon the beautiful bay in a neat little pleasure-boat, to enjoy themselves in sailing. While so engaged, they observed at some distance to seaward, a small sloop standing in for the town, close upon the wind, with her decks crowded with people. Attracted by this unusual occurrence at a very quiet fishing port, our amateur sailors ran down towards the stranger sail with the intention of speaking her. As they approached, their interest was additionally excited by the merry sound of female laughter, borne gaily over the waves, commingled with the deeper tones of the masculine voice, and a row of heads were seen peering over the bulwarks. Just as the pleasure-boat dashed gallantly by, almost under the counter of the sloop, one beautiful

girl sprang up and seated herself upon the taffrail, nearly over the heads of the young men as they passed ; and, at that moment, the wind suddenly changing, produced what is called a jibe. The great boom of the sloop came quickly over, sweeping the unfortunate girl like a feather far into the sea. A universal shout of terror rose from either crew, as the little vessels passed on ; and almost before the sound had died upon the ear, George found himself hatless and shoeless, struggling with the waves, with a hen-coop, a camp-stool, and an oar scattered around him, the vessels some hundreds of yards distant, and close at hand the inanimate form of a very lovely female, stunned by the blow, and buoyed up for the moment by her dress. He contrived to support his insensible charge by swimming until he reached the hen-coop, where he patiently awaited the arrival of a boat from the sloop, which was already lying to at a short distance ; for, immediate assistance from his own friends was impossible, they having shot far to leeward before recovering from their alarm.

We need not pause to tell how our hero and the still insensible girl were received among her companions of the fishing party on board the sloop, nor is it worth while to say what thanks were uttered by her when sufficiently recovered from her stunning bruises and fright to be made acquainted with the manner of her escape from an accident generally fatal in its conse-

quences. George waited upon her to her cottage residence, at a short distance from the town; he learned that she was the orphan daughter of an Englishman, and started, with a strange foreboding of evil, when he heard her name—it was Amy Elliott, a name not to be mentioned with safety in hearing of Captain Abijah Wentworth!

A happy man was Abijah Wentworth, when the Morning News-letter gave him information of “the generous achievement of his son, in rescuing from drowning a pretty little country lass of eighteen, an assistant teacher in the free school at Lynn.” His own experience had not taught him this great secret of the heart, that the strongest incentive to love is in woman the sense of protection, and in man the privilege of being permitted to protect; nor, indeed, blinded as he was by the oblivious vapours of success in life, could he then have conceived the possibility of a marriage between a member of the wealthy and distinguished family of Wentworth and the penniless teacher of a village school; and it was with a feeling of real humanity that he cautioned his son to be careful of the frequency of his visits to Lynn, which were naturally extremely agreeable to the young man, after the service he had rendered to a little girl whose name the father never even thought it necessary to inquire.

“Be careful, George,” he would say; “young girls

are curious creatures, and are apt to fall in love with those who are very kind to them, without considering the wide differences of social position. Do not run any risk of counterbalancing the favour you have rendered, by fatally engaging the affections of one whom you can never marry, because she is so far beneath you in position. If any son of mine should play the traitor in love, as that vile Elliott did in both love and politics, I would disown him on the instant."

"It is strange," replied George, "but I was just thinking of the name of Elliott too. Father, they say it was a good old stock, formerly, in England, though you have always taught me to hate the name. Now, if ever I were to meet with an Elliott who seemed to be possessed of merit and integrity, and were to trust him and cultivate his acquaintance until I found him to be a man of worth, would you have me to cut him merely because his name was Elliott?"

"George!" returned the father, "as you hope for my blessing, never confide in an Elliott. Never trust one of the tory blood, in love or business! Should you do so with my knowledge, these doors should be closed against you for ever, were you a thousand times my son;" and the old man flung himself petulantly out of the room.

The young man looked sorrowfully thoughtful for a

moment, then turned, and going to the stable, put his trotter in the sulkey, and drove off to Lynn.

About four months passed rapidly away, and "the child" had become a man. It is curious to observe what sudden changes of character are produced by the magic number, twenty-one. As George descended the stairs on the morning of his majority, the housekeeper, courtesying respectfully, said, "Good morning, *Mister* George," and his reply was that of a condescending superior addressing an approved dependant. "I am happy to see you looking so well this morning, *sir*," said the father; as the young man entered the parlour; and his mother, throwing her arms round his neck, falteringly murmured, "My son!"

The little family having concluded their morning meal, in almost melancholy sadness,—for the occurrence of great changes always renders us serious—Abijah said to his son, "George, it is time that you and I should have some little understanding with each other, in relation to the future; will you walk with me to the counting house?" And, on arriving at the *sanctum* of the old merchant, the following colloquy took place between them.

"Of course, young man," said the elder, "you are aware that you have a living to make in the world."

"Of course, father!" replied the junior.

“Though my means are very ample, I have no disposition,” continued Abijah, “to tempt my son to a life of idleness and luxury ; this would be to encourage you in vice, and to invite your ruin. At my death, I shall probably leave you rich ; but I do not choose to risk the dissipation of my fortune during my lifetime—what do you expect of me, sir ?”

“Nothing, father !”

“Nothing ! no, no, it shall not be quite so bad as that ! Out of nothing, nothing can be made.”

“Have you not given me a thorough education, father, and am I not a man, with a heart and a hand, and a strong constitution ? What more could I possibly require ?”

“Boldly and bravely said,” exclaimed the father. “Do but prove yourself what you profess to be, and you may command thrice as many thousands as I now offer you hundreds ; yet, though you are so self-confident, you must have something to begin with. Take this, George,” said he, handing him a draft for five hundred dollars ; “you will lose it all, of course, in some silly speculation, but by the time you have rendered yourself utterly good for nothing, you will probably have learned enough to repay you three times the value, in experience : this is quite enough, however, to remunerate that sharp schoolmaster, and if, in five years, you *are* worth triple

the sum, you may call on me again. Now, what do you propose *to do* with yourself?"

"I propose to marry, sir!" replied George, with firmness.

"Ha! ha!" said Abijah, perversely mistaking the young man's meaning; "you are indeed a man with a *heart* at least. Commend me to your precocity! Well, there are worse speculations than matrimony, in the business world, when a man has a head as well as a heart. I married myself once, you know, and I can't say that I was ever the poorer for so doing. And where do you propose *to go*, George?"

"Wherever my interest calls me," said the son.

"Excellent! I shall not attempt to pry into your secrets. We shall hear from you, of course, as soon as you have made a settlement."

"I shall feel little disposition to write letters until I can send intelligence of good fortune, sir!"

"And *when* do you propose to go?" asked the father.

"To-day," was the terse reply.

Abijah Wentworth started, and a tear stood in the corner of his eye; but, pausing for a moment, he said with the slightest possible tremor of voice, "Well, as you choose, and God bless you, my son!" And the two Wentworths returned to the parlour.

Let us pass over the agitating scene with the mother that morning. Suffice it to say, that at eleven o'clock

George Washington Wentworth leaped into his own little travelling carriage, a grown-up Yankee boy in search of a fortune; and the halls of his infancy knew him no more! The route of his journey, the place of his rest, must be judged from the detached facts which we are able to collect, for his history has never been chronicled.

Three days after the disappearance of our hero, old Mr. Wentworth observed in the daily paper an advertisement, which he hastened to read to his wife. It was a call from the selectmen of Lynn, for the services of a female teacher in the place of Miss Amy Elliott, who had suddenly resigned and left the town.

“Poor girl,” said Abijah; “broken-hearted, I fear. One of my friends at Salem informed me of a current report that George was attentive to his little *protegee*, but I had confidence in the boy, and laughed at the idea. Strange that girls will be so silly as to cast their affections on those so much above their rank in society! I am sorry that it was George’s fate to come to the rescue.”

Travelling was slower in those days than now. About a month after this occurrence there was dire confusion in Wentworth Hall. A storm of anathemas thundered from the throat of Abijah, and floods of tears furrowed the cheek of his wife. A newspaper had been received, postmarked New York. Its margin bore

these words, "Will not my father send me his forgiveness? Direct to J. Browne and Co., Pearl Street." What could it mean? Alas, one item told too well! And thus it read:

"Married, on Thursday last, by Alderman Smith, Mr. George Washington Wentworth, late of Boston, to the amiable Miss Amy Elliott, of Lynn, Massachusetts."

That very night was mailed a letter burning with reproaches, denouncing George as a tory at heart, Amy as a disgrace to his father, and he disinherited for ever! About six weeks later, the mother received a note without name, date, or post-mark, to this effect:

"Dear mother, now my all of early memory!—Tell my father that it is *I*, not *he*, that married Amy Elliott. It belongs to *me*, not *him*, to estimate her worth."

From this time, all trace of young Wentworth's career was lost to the friends of his youth, except that annually on thanksgiving day—that most beautiful of social observances peculiar to New England—a mysterious little packet was received by Mrs. Wentworth, through an untraceable agency, the simple name "George" being invariably inscribed within the envelope; and it was as regularly embalmed in tears. Some circumstances bearing upon his fate, however, have become known to us, and should be repeated here.

In 1816, an English naturalist, upon a tour of observation among the wilds of Pennsylvania, while wandering, faint and hungry, toward evening, near the banks of the Allegheny, encountered a man of singularly intelligent appearance, searching the woods, with a rifle on his shoulder, for a drove of cattle, who in a stampede had gone far beyond the usual limits of their unfenced grazing ground in the wilderness. The stranger inquired for food and shelter, and with true woodland hospitality, the forester invited him to share his cottage and his board. "We are not rich," said he, "though in a few years three or four hundred dollars wisely invested in well-selected grounds, and the natural progress of this wonderful country, will probably render us so; but I am blessed with the best of wives, and fourteen years of frugal industry have surrounded us with comforts rarely met with in this region. Stranger, come and share them! My cattle are beyond the reach of a pedestrian; let them study the stars till to-morrow."

A walk of about four miles brought them within view, not of a rude log hut, but of a well-appointed cottage. Vines overshadowed it, cultivated flowers gave odour to the air, and the surrounding grounds were shaded, (rare excellence in America,) with noble trees redeemed from the primeval forest. In the wilderness, it was a paradise. Before the door sat a lovely woman, young,

though a wife of fourteen years. Content and practical happiness shone in every feature, as she quietly sat at her wheel, twining the snow-white wool. On the green, by her side, a bright little urchin lay playing with a dog.

As the father and his new acquaintance came close upon the group, the child flew to meet him, and the mother gracefully rose. Carrying the youngster in his arms, the forester approached the woman—shall we not call her lady?—she moved as such.

“Amy, my love,” said he, “this stranger is tired and hungry. Make him comfortable. None know better how. I will remain and romp awhile with little Elliott.”

“Elliott!” exclaimed the stranger with a start. “Excuse me, sir! why Elliott?”

“His mother’s name,” replied the forester, in some surprise.

“And *her* father’s?”—

“Was Thomas Elliott, of Bristol, England.”

“*Eureka!* I give you joy! Why, my dear sir, my friend, Mr. William Elliott of Nova Scotia, an American refugee from Boston, died two years ago, leaving a considerable provincial estate to the heirs of his cousin, the late Mr. Elliott of Bristol. I have seen repeated advertisements in the New York papers inquiring for the only living heir—a daughter, known to have emigrated to this

country many years ago. Mr. Elliott of Bristol was a respectable man, but poor. His daughter will inherit eighty thousand pounds."

"Now, George," cried Amy, in an ecstasy of delight, as her husband bent upon her an affectionate glance; "now you will revisit the friends of your youth—your mother, your father!"—

"And take you with me, Amy!"

"I!—I go!—Willie and Mary lie sleeping in that grove! Do you go, George; but take me not from the graves of my children!" and the mother burst into tears.

The stranger's eye was wet as George solemnly said, "Never will I enter my father's door until you have been welcomed as his daughter! But we forget our guest. Some supper, Amy.—Come, Elly, let us go in!"

While fortune had been thus favouring George, the absurd pride of Abijah had struggled painfully with the natural affection in his bosom. To escape this tumult of feeling, he had once more ventured into trade, but the gnawings of conscience interfered with the cool calculation so necessary to the merchant. He became irritable and rash, misfortune followed misfortune, and at length, in his sixty-eighth year, the failure of an extensive house involved him in irreparable ruin.

Three years after the scene in the cottage the broken-

hearted old man was witness to the sale, under the hammer, of the home of forty years. The sale proceeded. A shrewd old dealer of real estate who was present was observed to bid with unusual readiness, and even the creditors were satisfied with the price, when the "going—going—gone! And the name, sir!" of the sheriff was answered by the loud voice of the broker, "George Washington Wentworth!"

Long before we last saw the hero of our story, Abijah and the daughter of the revolutionary Colonel had gone peacefully to rest, in the hall of the Wentworths and the arms of their children. But when I congratulated the now wealthy proprietor upon the happiness by which he was surrounded, Amy looked very sorrowful as he replied, "I should have little indeed to try me, but that I fear my son Elliott is in danger of forming an attachment to a young person very much beneath him in social advantages."—Who shall deny that the vices, as well as the virtues, are hereditary?

WHEN I WAS BRIDESMAID.

BY MISS LOUISA H. SHERIDAN.

WHAT an agreeable social duty is that of being bridesmaid! the peaceful, affectionate interpretation, by woman, of being Second to a friend.

Brides are generally occupied with thoughts of the calm past, and timid anticipation of the future, so that they shrink from their position in the assemblage; but bridesmaids, in their light-hearted gaiety, think only of the smiling present; and therefore, as the most giddy, are perhaps the best philosophers.

Persons are often voted stupid for not seeing a mere flirtation; but, perchance their blindness consists in having more interesting "business of their own." Whenever old or young gossips (the police-force of society!) are seen watching an incipient flirtation, it is a sure sign they have never had an opportunity of playing principal in that pleasing delinquency.

If, however, a wedding be seriously in progress, a sudden enlightenment comes over the dullest of us "young

ladies wanting situations as bridesmaids." The truth of the important matter is cleverly ascertained: and we contrive to be included in the ceremonies, by a few manœuvres which shall not here be revealed.

Weddings are seldom settled until very late in the season when the dread of everybody leaving town before the *déjeuner*, hurries all the preparations. The pleased bridesmaids, however, do not care how late it may be; for they will have a reasonable plea for "one more white bonnet," after all other excuses have failed, even with themselves.

Last July, I remember—but I may as well begin my story regularly from Easter, as it is journalized in a book wherein I have recorded the weddings—*when I was bridesmaid*.

ULVERSHOLM ABBEY, EASTER, 1838.—Easter is the chrysalis week of London butterfly life: the preparatory state between torpid winter and joyous spring. This abbey, where I have come to "chrysalize," is so quiet and dull, that I should certainly emerge as a "Death's head moth," if something of interest in the heart department had not been in progress among our visitors.

Last week every one here told me, with mysterious smiles, that "Mr. Devereux and Miss Allingham were engaged!" but my bridesmaid-tact perceived that love had not been named between them. The frank counte-

nance of Mr. Devereux was often clouded with anxious uncertainty ; while gratified vanity was the only feeling which sparkled in the flirting beauty's dark eyes.

A London girl should never flirt with a country gentleman in a downright country house. The natives register every phrase unkindly ; the country misses are enraged at losing their small share of man's society ; and the old people decry her pretensions to their county *bon-parti*,—whom she will forget ere she passes the first turnpike.

Such was my reflection on seeing Miss Allingham's "mere flirtation" with Mr. Devereux. But, during the week, appearances have been gradually changing, until acknowledged love has assumed in each its unfailing symptoms—timidity in woman, triumph in her master.

Yes ! I shall soon have to decide between ordering a lilac or a primrose satin dress ; for my services as bridesmaid, I see, will be put speedily into requisition.

TUESDAY.—A rainy, stormy, wretched morning. Our good host is of opinion that "talent should never lie idle a day ;" therefore he has proposed to arrange a set of *tableaux vivans* for to-morrow ; and all the womankind have been stitching costumes, except Miss Allingham and myself. We, being the only painters here, have been occupied in drawing backgrounds on stretched canvass for the different scenes ; an improve-

ment which adds considerably to the illusion of these living pictures.

Amateur acting is often stigmatized by spectators as being a vehicle for flirtation. Alas! if they knew the jealous efforts of every one to secure principal characters, they would feel there is more chance of hate than love among private exhibitors!

While Miss Allingham sketched some mountain views for the Scotch *tableaux*, and I as hastily worked out a Venetian landing-place and gondola for scenes from Byron, Mr. Devereux read aloud to us a new Spanish Tour.

He is well qualified for the task, having lived very much at Madrid, where his sister married an Hidalgo. This lady, the Marquesa de Mirandares, has arrived, for the season, in London, with a host of her Spanish connexions. One of these is coming here to-morrow, *en route* to Newmarket, so we are civilly preparing ourselves "according to book."

Mr. Devereux dislikes both Spain and its inhabitants; and his laughing caustic commentaries were infinitely more amusing than the Tour.

WEDNESDAY, MIDNIGHT.—The Spaniard has been here, and is just departed: I wish he had never come! He arrived soon after breakfast, and his manner showed that perfect confidence in his own merits and appear-

ance, which provokes my dislike in proportion to its extent and success.

But his singing, guitar-playing, valseing, sighing, and love-making, directed to Miss Allingham, have given her a fit of nonsense, and Mr. Devereux a fit of angry jealousy. The bright complexion of the Englishman has been deepened with annoyance all the day; and I did not think blue eyes could have flashed such lightnings as fell on the exquisite Don Raymon de Rivas. The Caballero saw and enjoyed the mischief occasioned by his gallantries; and dear thoughtless Charlotte forgot all her recently acquired steadiness, and gave way to a foreign new flirtation, *à bride abattu*.

Our hapless *tableaux* added to the evening's confusion. They were a series of groups from well-known stories, to represent Hope, Expectation, Sorrow, and the various feelings, exemplified by "Jeanie Deans and the Queen," "The Corsair's Bride," "Auld Robin Gray," &c. The final one, Surprise, was to be "the meeting of Beppo with Laura and the Count after the ball."

Miss Allingham's classic head and style just suited the costume for Laura: she had requested Mr. Devereux to personate the Count, and our host rejoiced in the droll old Beppo. As Mr. Devereux was hastening away to dress, however, Don Raymon, with the most supercilious civility, requested the loan of the Count's costume, as Miss Allingham was very desirous he should perform

the scene with her—provided Mr. Devereux had no objection!

I looked round to see if Charlotte really countenanced this proposal; but she had gone to dress: then I hoped to see Mr. Devereux looking angry, as it would show he still took an interest in Miss Allingham's proceedings, even if it were to blame them! But matters were beyond that point, and he answered with ominous calmness as he left the room, "You have *my* permission, sir, to enact any character with the lady which suits her taste."

Don Raymon disappeared; Charlotte entered (looking very lovely) with the merry-faced Beppo, who knew nothing of the changed actors, and therefore jested as to the handsome couple she and Count Devereux would be when his toilet was completed. Our dear old host sets his heart on making up a marriage every Easter; and his interest for Mr. Devereux is as great as though himself were to be bridegroom.

But when the handsome Raymon entered as the Count, and took his lover-like attitude beside Charlotte, the discomfited Beppo gave an angry stare, more natural than any tableau actor ever attained. Miss Allingham, having hitherto vainly tried to drill his joyous face into a severe expression, made the signal for the curtain to rise ere his astonishment was over; so that in the

momentary scene he acted admirably—without knowing it.

The *tableaux* were succeeded by valseing, and much tender nonsense between the new flirts: and I observed that each covertly watched the calm, pale, stern countenance of Mr. Devereux; the Spaniard from gratified vanity, and Charlotte with the unpardonable motive of witnessing the pain she caused. I rejoiced when Don Raymon's carriage was announced; we all immediately separated, out of humour: and so ended our day of pleasure.

THURSDAY.—The lovers do not speak; and I find both are too proud to be manageable by reasoning on their dissension. Charlotte had promised one of the guests a drawing of the Abbey for her album; but being Spanish-mad this morning, she drew for her a *contrabandista* in a *capa* and *sombrero*—the very image of Don Raymon de Rivas. The album-keeper, with the well-planned “innocence” of an envious country miss, instantly showed it to Mr. Devereux, adding the warmest commendation of Miss Allingham's power of drawing from memory!

The same amiable person then asked Charlotte to sing; and as the latter is always crazy about any new melody, she sang one of Don Raymon's valse-like songs, ending with the eternal “Ya, ya, ya, i!” which in Spain supplies the place of our “La-ra-la;” and the accompa-

niment she played in the disagreeable Spanish style, by striking the guitar-strings backward with the nails, as the Caballero had taught her.

More praises from the young lady to Mr. Devereux, as to Miss Allingham's surprising quickness at learning music!

In the evening Charlotte said she was too tired to valse, when our worthy Beppo wanted her to join the others: so she played for us all the evening. Mr. Devereux sat apart with a book, and no salutation passed as the party separated.

FRIDAY.—This is our last morning at the abbey, as Miss Allingham and I are to set out for London immediately after breakfast. Mr. Devereux has always distinguished me by a most gratifying friendliness; and, as we happened to meet *tête-à-tête* before the others came down, I almost succeeded in bringing back one of his good-humoured smiles. Alas! just as his brilliant teeth were displayed to reward my pains, we heard Charlotte's sweet voice in the conservatory, singing "*Una paloma blanca!*" and she came valseing down through the flowers to its chorus of "*tripili, trapala!*" I shall never forgive the Spaniards for inventing such stupid words: in fact, I shall hate that very pretty little song for ever, because it pushed down my castles, which were not built—*en Espagne*.

One of Miss Allingham's great charms, and which

raises her so immeasurably above the women here, is her perfect gentleness of manner. Her style is completely unassuming,—that sure criterion of genius, good breeding, and good sense; and her brilliant conversation flows in a sweet low tone, and perfect repose of demeanour, which contrasts delightfully with the “animated” country misses, whose active mirth only enlivens themselves.

Great was my surprise therefore, when, the brother of our Miss Marplot having expressed a hope that “the gay foreigners in London would not make Miss Allingham desert her English friends,” she answered in a sarcastic tone, that “Englishmen were proverbially illiberal towards foreigners, through jealousy of their superior social accomplishments; but Englishwomen, not having such a cause of prejudice, could do more justice to their advantages!”

She left the room on concluding this ill-chosen speech: and Mr. Devereux, as he went into the library, favoured us with a parting comment, that “women were always taken with novelty and assurance,—the worse the more agreeable.”

LONDON, SATURDAY.—The belligerents exchanged a very dignified farewell yesterday. Mr. Devereux was evidently anxious, in the morning, to end their difference; but ill-judged pride caused him to part from

Charlotte almost as a stranger ; while the latter, whose quivering lip betrayed to me her feeling at their separation in displeasure, chose to express her longing to hear again the rattle of the dear London pavement.

We all shrink from the obloquy of being thought unfeeling : yet, when we feel the most, do we not often affect levity to veil it ? And generally so successfully, that we are disliked for what we seem, rather than pitied for what we are.

Ere we left the Abbey, I went into the library to replace a book, and found Mr. Devereux alone, writing. He requested me to take charge of the letter to his sister the Marquesa, with whom he was desirous I should become acquainted.

“ I have urged her to be very intimate with Char—with Miss Allingham,” he added in an uncertain tone ; “ at my sister’s house, there will be an opportunity of confirming her Spanish taste, or of seeing through the imposing glitter of their manners.”

“ The latter is sure to be the result,” I replied ; “ and then you will come to town ? Remember, you have been rather rigid and unyielding in this trifling matter, to which opposition has given false importance.”

“ When she is quite convinced of her present mistake, I will but too gladly visit London,” he answered : “ may I trust to your warm-hearted nature to watch over my

interests, and let me know when the happy hour arrives?"

I could not help assenting: and he bestowed on me all the "dear, noble, charming, amiable, superior," epithets with which men load an obliging confidante: and thus we parted.

As we drove past the library windows, I distinguished over the wire-blinds the richly-clustered chestnut hair of Mr. Devereux, who had forgotten that his towering height would betray the watcher of our movements: and I certainly saw a white handkerchief passed across the eyes of the proud, offended lover.

His indignant fair one kept her head averted from the house; but the bouquet in her hand received heavier and warmer drops than ever before fell on its blossoms.

If,—instead of being attached—these two people hated each other, the rules of society would exact the most extreme mutual good-breeding. It is only hearts kindly enough for deep affection, that dare make each other perfectly miserable!

MAY 24th.—I have called on the Marquesa de Mirandares. She is a very elegant woman, but quite foreign in her manner, and rather too diplomatic to please me. She has had Miss Allingham with her every day, and expects her on a visit in the house next week, so that the experiment of Mr. Devereux will have full scope of trial.

JUNE 7th.—More than a fortnight of this engrossing season has passed, and it was only last night that I was able to accept a *Tertulia* invitation from the Marquesa, at whose house Miss Allingham is now staying.

The suite of rooms were faintly lighted, and redolent with the perfume of tuberoses and orange-trees in blossom: the furniture more scanty than our style, and of a more lounging, Moorish description. The society was divided into tête-à-têtes, murmured conversations between Caballeros caressing their moustachios, and Señoras fluttering large fans, which looked like gigantic moths flitting amid the orange-trees.

In a recess sat Miss Allingham, her smooth hair shaded by a black mantilla-veil, in which she looked most lovely. Her slender feet, in embroidered Spanish slippers, rested on a velvet cushion, on the edge of which a Caballero had thrown his elegant figure; and he was watching her first attempt at using castañets as I approached.

Charlotte's usual elegant salutation was exchanged for some mystic motion of her moth-like fan towards me, and the words "*Beso la mano de usted!*"

"How can you kiss my hand without even taking it," said I, laughing at the beauty's new whim; "but where is the Marquesa?"

"She will soon appear, and then we shall have some music: on these fatiguing *tertulia* nights she takes a

longer *siesta* than usual. In the meanwhile, let me say in her name, *esta casa es al servicio de usted*. Consider this house as yours."

"Generous creature, I shall take you at your word, and turn the whole establishment out of it to-morrow! But how ill you play those castañets; the rule is to execute with three fingers what is termed a 'turn' on the piano, and then clic-clac your single notes to complete each bar."

To show *la belle* that she was imperfect in her Spanish affectations, I exhibited my own skill on those spirit-stirring pieces of ebony; and the Spaniards, who have extraordinary national conceit, were more pleased than if I had displayed an accomplishment really requiring genius, but not originating in their country.

The beau at Miss Allingham's feet paid me some extravagant compliment: my tableau-acquaintance, Don Raymon, left a group of young men, to salute me with "*Senorita a los pies de usted*:"—and then called to his moustachio'd friends, "Ahi! Geronimo, Pepe, Jayme, Antonio, the Señora Inglesa is as accomplished as a Madrileña!" This announcement brought from the Caballeros the same salutation as Don Raymon's: so that, in words, I had all the world "at my feet!"

Miss Allingham's especial flirt, seated on the cushion, was Don Cristoval de Cebada, nephew of the Marques de Mirandares. He soon afterwards received a sum-

mons to sing: and without rising from his sentimental position, he took a guitar, and sang to Charlotte the impassioned "*D'amore me muero!*" I thought of my absent favourite, Mr. Devereux; and the Spaniard's eyes seemed to me most impertinently beautiful.

When Don Cristoval concluded his lovesick *aria*, there were songs from the Dons Geronimo, Pepe, Raymon, Jayme, and Antonio, ending alternately with "Ya—ya—ya—ih!" and "O qui no—no—no!"—all addressed to Miss Allingham, the reigning belle. The music was succeeded by valseing, in which the Caballeros appeared to the utmost advantage. Charlotte, who has adopted their graceful style, danced with the eternal Geronimo, Pepe, Antonio, Raymon, and Jayme: but between each with Don Cristoval, who indeed scarcely left her for a moment.

I stopped in the valse near the Marquesa, and conveyed to her my anxiety for her brother's hopes, adding a wish that she would invite him to town. But in her ambiguous mild way, she said, "Matters must take their own course;" and the dance separated us.

I sometimes think this wily woman is not acting openly by all parties: perhaps her attachment for her husband may induce her to assist his nephew's evident design on the fortune of our heiress, which would be most welcome to an extravagant young captain in the *Escuadron Ligero*.

JUNE 14th.—Charlotte's mania is becoming worse than ever. At the first tertulia I attended, she had only adopted the mantilla-veil and high comb : but last night she also wore the *Basquina* robe, with deep flounces of black fringe nearly to the waist, only fit for a Bolero dancer ! Her fan was flourished most intelligibly among the Caballeros, (I could not help saying they followed it as dray-horses do their driver's whip,) and as each approached she began with "*Avhurr !*" or "*Ahi !*"

I requested she would speak to me, at least, in our native tongue : but she turned to the handsome De Cebada, and exclaiming "*Ahi, Cristoval, que barbaridad !*" valed off in his arms.

"*Cristoval*" indeed ! That abominable Marquesa has betrayed her brother's interests, to serve this dark, dissipated designing, disagreeable—— But, instead of running over "adjectives in D," I will write to Mr. Devereux by this day's post, and summon him to town ; for I will neither lose my lilac satin, nor wear it at the Spanish Ambassador's Chapel.

JUNE 28th.—A fortnight since I wrote ; and Mr. Devereux has not arrived, and he only noticed my letter by a brief note of thanks for my trouble. This serves me rightly, for stepping out of my usual non-interference : yet the warm heart and frank character of that young man interested me exceedingly in his cause. I

suppose, however, his wily sister has disgusted him with accounts of poor dear Charlotte's flirtations.

JUNE 30th.—Don Cristoval is gone—dismissed: and the beauty has allowed attention successively from those everlasting Dons, Geronimo, Pepe, Antonio, Raymon, and Jayme, but none has lasted long. She told me yesterday she had refused Don Cristoval, who could only be tolerated for his nationality. But he carried the quality too far, by partaking of a national Poochero (or Ollapodrida,) after Miss Allingham had anathematized garlic! Such an act of treason the admired belle never forgave.

She added that every one of these young men, notwithstanding their court-breeding, had, on intimacy, evinced some vulgarity or coarseness which revolted her habits of refinement. Don Geronimo was slovenly all the morning, Pepe she had seen take liqueur before dinner, Jayme could not live without a cigar, Raymon's gallantry was obtrusive, Antonio used snuff, and could scarcely spell his own romantic name!

I saw by these mighty offences, that the crisis of her Spanish fit was over, and fast turning to disgust. If Mr. Devereux were not so obstinately dignified, I think an hour or two might settle their misunderstanding.

JULY 1st.—This morning I expressed to Miss Allingham my extreme pleasure that she would not marry Don Cristoval.

“Marry! I shall never marry any one,” she said in her gentle tone.

“And why not, Charlotte? You have too much heart, under that slight surface of coquetry, to pass through life without an attachment.”

“I am convinced I should be happier in remaining single,” she replied. “All my life I have been used to meet consideration for my wishes, and kind indulgence of my tastes; therefore, it would be misery to have them now thwarted; especially by one I loved, who would thence have the greatest power of wounding me.”

I saw she was thinking with sorrow and disappointment of Mr. Devereux, so I asked, “But why must your tastes and wishes of necessity be thwarted? No two persons are formed in perfect sympathy; but do you think any man would be so selfish as to marry you without an inclination, at least, to make you happy?”

“An inclination, perhaps,” she replied, “where it did not clash with his own habits. But the only person I have ever loved during my gay career, could not suppress his spirit of contradiction, or the obstinate pride of not yielding to woman,—though the trifling matter was beneath his maintaining.”

“Dear Charlotte, it might have been a fault of manner, rather than of character: a want of thought as to

the effect sternness would produce on you, and not a spirit of obstinacy or contradiction."

"And why should there be 'a want of thought, regarding my feelings,' dearest? Is not the first duty of affection to avoid giving pain,—and does not happiness depend on the hourly trifles of life, rather than its rarer grand events?"

I could not help thinking it was a pity she had not remembered these maxims while her flirtation had given pain originally; but not daring to allude to this, I merely said, "I am sure, if Mr. Devereux were here, he and I"——

"But he is *not* here!" she interrupted, in a gentle yet proud tone; "and be so good as not to renew this subject."

I said no more: but I gladly perceived that his "*not being here*" was my favourite's great offence. When he is weary of playing Magnificent, and condescends to enact Rational, she is evidently more than half prepared to forgive him; and then we shall have tears, reconciliation, a wedding—and *bridesmaids*!

JULY 10th.—Alas! my hope of being "Second," as I wished, is less probable than ever! Would that we had all the Don Cristovals, Pepes, Geronimos, Raymons, Jaymes, and Antonios, back again: for there is a new Hidalgo arrived this week, in whom I see more peril than in all the other flirtations multiplied by fifty.

The stranger, Don Pasquale de Olivares, is taller than the other Spaniards we have seen ; more gentlemanly and quiet in his demeanour, and less engrossed with studying external graces, which give to his countrymen an effeminate style of manner. He has jet black hair and moustachios, pearly teeth of English beauty, a complexion as olive as his name, and yet with bright blue eyes. These are so unstudied in their expression of good-nature, so calm in their honest, sensible gaze, that all the flashing dark orbs I have lately known seem to me restless almost like insanity !

JULY 12th.—Our new acquaintance, Don Pasquale, gains in every one's esteem the more he is known. He does not attempt English ; but his French is perfect, and devoid of that unaccountable harshness which usually betrays an Italian or Spanish tongue, though their own languages are so soft.

True chivalric feeling towards our sex imparts to men's manners that softness and respect which form the golden medium between bluntness and obtrusive gallantry. Don Pasquale's clear independent ideas, restrained within the bounds of considerate good-breeding, have quite won my heart, and I have half a fancy to try my own powers of pleasing him !

It is said there is "honour among thieves." There may be so, as those who made the proverb doubtless spoke for themselves. But they could only refer to

thieves masculine, if *hearts* were the articles to be respected: for, with a friend's lover as temptation, I think none will affirm "there is honour among *flirts*!"

As for seriously loving a foreigner, however, that passes my comprehension. Well-educated women are generally epicures in love-speeches, and their dainty tastes would be jarred by even a provincial tone: what effect, then, must broken, bad English produce? It would be almost maddening to hear two of the sweetest epithets in our language uttered as "*my Sol*!" and "*my Loaf*!"

Charlotte seems the exception to this rule, however, for she receives the attentions of Don Pasquale with evident gratification,—and they are not the superficial gallantries of her late flirts, he is most deeply attached to her. I have asked the Marquesa respecting his birth and fortune: her reply was, "Quite as good as our own." I conclude also that he is a Protestant, for I hear he is generally seen twice on Sunday at a quiet church some distance from our *quartier*.

Notwithstanding these recommendations, and his own advantages, I cannot understand Miss Allingham's conduct. In his presence she seems much pleased; but after his departure, overwhelmed with sadness. She is too highly principled to marry him unless her heart is free from the image of another: and yet I cannot bear to think of my favourite Mr. Devereux being banished

for ever, for such slight cause. Whatever her sentiments may be for either, she is perfectly miserable, and her health is failing under the conflict.

JULY 16th.—I know not what to do! Mr. Devereux has written to me, stating he has arrived in town, to explain his silence and absence; and he begs me to meet him at his sister's by two o'clock, to learn his fate! I commenced writing to Charlotte on the subject; but am interrupted by a hurried scrawl from her, begging I will come immediately in the carriage of the Marquesa, as Don Pasquale had demanded a private interview, and she wishes me to be in the house. Oh, if I could see her before his declaration: for she is so piqued at the unexplained silence of Mr. Devereux, that she may commit "high-spirited" misery for herself, to prove her indifference!

FOUR O'CLOCK.—Don Pasquale was but too punctual! his horses were before the door when I arrived, and the Marquesa's page waited to conduct me to her boudoir, "as the Señorita Allingham was particularly engaged."

I confided to the Marquesa that her brother was come to town: she was already aware of it, but said she was not to see him until two o'clock. I thought her ambiguous smile implied that much might be decided before that hour.

The pendule struck the quarter before two—then the important hour—still Don Pasquale remained up stairs;

and, fortunately, still no knock at the door. My suspense was past endurance; therefore I resolved at all hazards to interrupt the tête-à-tête, and strive to send away the Caballero until Mr. Devereux had an opportunity for one effort to regain his former place.

I rose to go upstairs. The Marquesa drawled forth “Stay—I will accompany you to the drawing-room, where I know you are going.” She slowly rose; and looked deliberately for her handkerchief, her flacon, her tapestry and worsted balls, her bouquet, and her fan: these being collected, she, with her usual affectation, requested the aid of my arm.

I thought we never should have reached the summit of the stairs; for at every step I expected to hear the knock at the door. I felt sure she delayed purposely to favour her husband’s compatriot; and I dreaded lest poor dear Mr. Devereux, with his warm heart filled by joyous hope, should arrive in time to witness the obnoxious tête-à-tête.

The Marquesa just recollected that her scissors were forgotten: I was not civil enough to seek them; and she slowly deposited with me the worsted balls, &c., while she went down stairs again.

I opened the drawing-room door gently:—I saw Don Pasquale’s arm was round Charlotte’s waist, while his other hand held hers. I looked at his countenance, uttered some exclamation of astonishment, and let all

the bright worsted balls roll over the floor, like parti-coloured rockets.

There were Don Pasquale's features and olive complexion, certainly ; but no moustache ; and no jet black hair ! There were instead, the bright clustering chestnut curls of Mr. Devereux, which I could recognise among a thousand.

"Well, I am rejoiced to see there has been one other person deceived !" said Charlotte, laughing at my surprise, amidst her bright confusion.

"Mr. Devereux, I am an ill-used victim to your dark deception," I said, looking at his embrowned complexion.

"My true-hearted, my faithful advocate !" he exclaimed with the rhapsody of a happy lover, "I owe half my success to your kindly aid. Only one more obligation you must confer : this day fortnight"—

"Oh, yes ! I will be your bridesmaid," said I.

"And I will give your *déjeûner*," said the calm Marquesa, who had entered, and was quietly picking up her worsted balls. How well that excellent actress had kept up the deception with Charlotte and myself : the husband of such a wife deserves to be here as ambassador !

We were all too happy, at that time, to inquire how Miss Allingham had decided that "persons of the same nation are the most appropriately educated for each

other." Nor did any one ask how Mr. Devereux became convinced that we poor women, being only children of a larger growth, require indulgence from superior man, who should be "to our faults a little blind."

The last week in July I signed my name as witness in the vestry of St. George's, Hanover Square. The bridegroom placed on my finger a signet-ring with the motto "*Muchas gracias!*" which his kind voice uttered with affectionate emphasis. He asked Charlotte would she not repeat it? but bridal disobedience commenced by her translating it to "Many thanks," as she embraced me. And I understand they have not spoken or heard one word of Spanish since that day—*when I was Bridesmaid.*





M A R Y.

SHE has torn it from its parent stem,
That little wild-wood flower,
To blossom in a lordly hall,
With her bosom for its bower.

Alas ! already drooping, with
The first glance of her eye,
The woodland gem with crisping leaf
Resigns itself to die.

It cannot brook the noonday sun,
Nor the air of the crowded hall ;
And Mary feels that one by one
Its leafy honours fall.

“ And why,” said the maid, with thoughtful brow,
“ Did I draw thee from the shade ?
For I was born for the sunny lawn,
And thou for the shadowy glade !”

And Mary, when I look on thee,
With thy dark love-lighted eye,
I liken thee to as frail a flower,
And may not check the sigh.

How gladly from thy parent stem,
Would I pluck thy blooming grace,
And proudly wear thee on my heart !
But to thee 'twere a fatal place :

Thy lot is cast where gardens bloom,
And tempered breezes stray,
But mine in the howl of the mountain storm,
Or the dash of the ocean spray.

I will not claim from the gay parterre
Where buds thy guarded life,
The charms that die with the chilling air
Of tempest and of strife.

GERTRUDE OF LANHERNE.

BY N. MICHELL, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "THE FATALIST," "THE TRADUCED," ETC.

THE tourist who, for geological purposes, or led by the countless motives which induce men to ramble abroad, explores the north coast of Cornwall, seldom fails to visit the valley of Mawgan, locally renowned for its surpassing beauty. The hills towards the east are rugged and barren; and in the distance may be seen, perched on an eminence, the famous remains of a Danish or British camp, known by the name of Castle-an-Dinas. But, looking down into the hollow, where stand the quiet village, and, like an old king gray with years, the tower of Mawgan church, no scene can be more picturesque and enchanting. In summer the eye reposes on the broad-leaved chestnut tree, the purple lilac, and the flowering ash. A bright stream frolics and dances, like a joyous fairy, beneath the boughs, while the murmur of the wild bee, or the bells from

the tower, only steal on the ear. All is freshness, fragrance, and shade; and the spot only wants classic associations to rival Tempe, or the Val d'Arno of Florence.

At the head of the valley, and not far from the church, stands a very ancient mansion, once occupied by a branch of the family of the Arundels. It is now a convent of Carmelite nuns, the predecessors of the present occupants having been afforded an asylum there at the outbreak of the French Revolution. But our sketch refers to that period when Lanherne Manor-house held not the silent, pensive devotee, but the representatives of a proud and ancient line. Sir Hugh Arundel, (we will name the baronet Sir Hugh,) treading in the steps of his forefathers, was a rigid Catholic. His was a bitter, fiery, uncompromising spirit; he hated a Protestant beyond Jew or Turk; and his feelings of rancour were probably enhanced by the fact that the star of Protestantism had long been in the ascendant in England. Sir Hugh would have revived the fires of Smithfield; he would, in his mistaken zeal, have rejoiced had another Spanish armada hovered off the coast, for he considered even the overthrow of the liberties of his country a thing to be desired, if instrumental in bringing about the regeneration of the people, and the re-establishment of the Catholic faith in its pristine glory.

Yet Sir Hugh Arundel possessed in his bosom the elements of goodness and virtue: he was generous to the poor; he was upright in all his actions; and, his blinding bigotry apart, he was a sincere and devout Christian.

The Baronet's wife was dead; his eldest son held a distinguished office about the court; but his only daughter, Gertrude, resided with the father at the Manor House in Cornwall. Gertrude was now in her eighteenth year, and her extreme beauty, coupled, perhaps, with the supposition that her wealthy father would give her a handsome dowry, attracted many suitors. But Gertrude's heart was possessed by one whose name she dared not even breathe in her father's hearing, for he whom she loved, although her equal as regarded family rank, was needy, and, more than all, he was a Protestant.

Miss Arundel one day was lingering in the picture gallery, where hung several court beauties of the period, the recent and glowing productions of Lely and Kneller; and now she was standing with folded hands and moistened eye before the portrait of her mother, when Sir Hugh abruptly opened a side door which led to his library, and advanced towards her. In spite of the fanatic gloom which habitually oppressed her father's spirit, he had hitherto been an indulgent parent, and his heart, though cold to all the world besides, was

warm towards his child. But unaccountable emotions seemed now to affect him; and, as he drew Gertrude by the arm into his study, and closed the door, the blackness of his features, the flashing of his eyes, and other unequivocal tokens of violent passion, caused her to shrink and shudder. •

Sir Hugh seated himself opposite to his daughter, and some minutes elapsed before he could so far restrain the tempest within as to be able to speak.

“Gertrude, I did believe that you loved me; that you were influenced by religious feeling, as well as guided by duty. Mine eyes are opened now; I have discovered you.”

The girl, who felt that her father had penetrated the secret of her love, returned no answer, but trembled, and cowered before the gloomy ascetic.

“I shall not tell you who, having a regard for your immortal soul, has informed me that you hold a clandestine intercourse with that young renegade from the faith of his ancestors—that beggar—that scoundrel—”

“Father, spare me, spare me!”

“Nay, hear me out; thou art my child, and I would fain save thee from perdition; but even did not religious considerations utterly oppose the alliance you would form, Walter Pellew’s acres have melted from him, and he is now a starveling, an adventurer, a most miserable dependant upon the bounty of others. Ay, ere thou

shouldst wed such a man, I, who have loved thee as no other parent loved his child—I, thy father, would gladly place thee in thy coffin.”

We pass over the painful dialogue which ensued, the daughter's entreaties and tears, and the father's fierce expostulations. The opposition of Sir Hugh was not to be overcome.

“And now, daughter, hear me!” he cried, contracting his lowering brows, and clenching his hand: “if thou dost persevere in this most unchristian and undutiful course, and unite thyself to Pellew, I and mine cast thee off for ever. With him, the apostate, the worse than branded Cain, mayst thou wander over the world and starve! I will also curse thee—curse thee now, and curse thee with my latest breath. Misery and remorse be thy portion here, and——daughter, thou wilt do well to avoid thy father's curse.”

Twilight was beginning to throw its soft, shadowy haze over the old Manor House, the hamlet, and tower; while the valley beyond was gradually fading from purple and gold into a mass of indistinguishable shade, when Gertrude, at some distance from her father's mansion, sat on a rustic bench. She was stooping her head, and violently sobbing. Before her stood a young man, Walter Pellew: his air was that of a high-born gentleman, and his person strikingly handsome; his

broad-skirted coat, tight hose, and ruffles of Flanders lace, were in accordance with the prevailing mode, but his head was not adorned, or disfigured by the fashionable peruke—the jetty hair grew as nature willed it, and, parted back from his high, massy forehead, fell in crisp curls around his face.

Gertrude Arundel had resolved to see her lover for the last time. Her father, rigid in all his religious observances, at a certain hour every evening closeted himself with the priest of the neighbourhood, and it was at these times that the girl, stealing from the house, was accustomed to meet Pellew.

“I will renounce my faith, dear Miss Arundel; I will essay all, dare all, rather than lose you!”

“No; I would not be yours, if the price you have to pay for my hand must be the base coin of hypocrisy. You shall do no violence to your principles. Unless honestly converted to my father’s faith, I would not even wish you to be a Catholic.”

“Noble girl, I honour your sentiments. Would that I had riches—that I had a soul worthy of you!”

“You *are* worthy of me, dear, dear Walter!” exclaimed Gertrude, rising, and clinging to Pellew’s arm; “and wealth I value not: with you I could be happy, if—if circumstances permitted—happy in obscurity, happy in want.”

“Then hesitate no longer; with love and untiring

affection I will surround you, with my sword I will carve my way to honourable distinction, and gain at last all that my unfortunate father has lost. Gertrude,"—he stooped over her, drawing her towards him—"we will not part—we were born to cherish, to love each other; say, say you will be mine!"

The girl looked into his face, but her eyes were again almost instantly averted; she shuddered, and moved back from him. "Never, Pellew! I cannot be yours—my father's curse—it rings in my ears, it pierces my brain. Let us now part: we must meet no more."

She sank again upon the rustic seat, and drew her mantle before her face, as though unwilling that her lover should read the agony that was secretly wringing her soul. We attempt not to describe in words what followed—the prayers, the representations, the wild vows of Pellew, or the anguish, the tears of Gertrude, with her ineffectual strugglings to check the warm gushings of a woman's affection. She loved her father, but her lover more; she felt that duty urged her to tear away those fresh, dear feelings, which, vine-like, had twined about her heart; yet there was a yearning towards the object of her affection scarcely to be resisted or overcome. Pellew, on a conviction that the present meeting would put a termination to their future intercourse, or make Miss Arundel his own, had provided

himself with a travelling carriage, which waited in a place of concealment about half a mile from the spot.

“Oh, urge me not! I cannot leave my home—although my father may be your enemy, he is my father still. I cannot brave his wrath—I cannot support his curse!”

Thus urged Gertrude's better nature; yet, even while she spoke, her resolution half melted away. Wavering and hesitating, she knelt on the turf; she prayed her lover to tempt her no longer, but to leave her. Pellew raised her, and, as she shed floods of tears, he gently led her away. Once more she gazed over the valley, the home of her childhood, and saw the gray walls of the Manor House peering in the twilight above the elms. It was but a moment—the scene vanished—and she was hurried along the winding path. Alas, for that once gay and light-hearted girl! in yielding to the promptings of an imprudent love, she entailed upon herself, (as others who have similarly acted have ever done,) years of unavailing regret and bitter self-accusation.

Time passed; the forsaken father had heard nothing of his child, save that she lived. The desire of vengeance on Pellew, which had at first stirred his nature to madness, settled into a feeling of deadly, unforgiving hatred. He rarely mentioned his daughter's name, and none of his friends ever ventured to speak of her. Pellew had

joined the English army on the continent, and, under the victorious Marlborough, had won high reputation. But Blenheim, Ramilies, and Oudenarde had been fought; the cannon's mouth was silenced, the banner was furled; and Marlborough and his generals returned to repose beneath their laurels.

It was a beautiful evening in summer. The valley of Mawgan was as still and full of verdure as it was ten years before; and the golden light from the west rested as tranquilly and lovingly as ever on the old tower, gray mansion, and densely-foliaged trees—for time, which alters man and all his works, brings no change to Nature. Before the little house of entertainment in the village, (for it did not aspire to the designation of an inn,) a travelling carriage drew up. This was a circumstance of no ordinary occurrence, since very rarely did the old Baronet at the Manor House receive visitors. The quiet village was in a ferment; and many an aged matron, suspending her domestic avocations, peered over her hatch to take a “good stare” at the great folks, whoever they might be, about to descend from the dashing vehicle. The gentleman wore the high military boots of the period; his dress was that of a field officer, and he was decorated with the badge of honour bestowed on those generals who had borne the brunt of the continental war with the queen’s “great captain.”

General Sir Walter Pellew led his lady through the village; she was muffled in a velvet cloak, and closely veiled, so that none could distinguish her features; her step faltered, and, though she clung closely to her husband's arm, it was with extreme difficulty that she proceeded. They reached the gate opening upon the avenue of trees that led to Lanherne House. Everything remained the same as Gertrude remembered it in her childhood, and a throng of memories, bitter yet sweet, came crowding upon her heart. But every other consideration was now merged in the great object of their visit; they had come seeking pardon of him whom they had injured—come to turn away his curse, and obtain his blessing before he died.

“Do I behold you alive, honoured Miss Gertrude?” cried the old butler, who instantly recognised his young mistress, as she entered the hall; and the man brushed away his tears, for he cried outright.

“Hush, Gilbert; thanks, thanks! Now conduct us quietly to my father.”

“That will I, Miss—I mean Lady Pellew. Sir Hugh is in his library—shall I announce you?”

“Not for worlds; we will follow you. Open the library door, and close it instantly after us.”

The Baronet was in his easy chair, closely studying a tome of the “Roman Fathers.” Ten years had ploughed deeper wrinkles on his brow, and given a

sterner expression to his thoughtful and saturnine features. So absorbed was he in his volume, that the visitors had entered, and almost stood by his side, ere he became conscious of their presence. He looked up; the book dropped from his hands, and, with a faint exclamation, he started, drawing himself at the same time backward in his chair.

“I know you now! woman, what do you here? I deemed you dead—better you or I had been in the grave, than thus meet again!”

Gertrude sank on the ground, and clasped the old man’s knees.

“Hear me, dear father, hear me!”

“I will not—begone!”

“On me, sir,” said Pellew, “let your vengeance fall—I only was to blame. I lured your daughter from you; the prize was too valuable, too dear, and I could not abandon it.”

“Ah, General Pellew, waiving all other matters between us, abandoning even my right to vengeance, I would ask you one question: when a poor youth, thou wert an apostate—art thou still of the heretical crew? art thou still a Protestant?”

“I am, I must admit, sir.”

“Away, then! I will have no communication with you. I curse you both! Leave me with my religion, my God, alone to die!”

They both knelt before the inexorable bigot. All they craved was his pardon, and permission to be near him, and attend him in his infirmities. Their pleading and supplications appeared to be utterly in vain; but at this moment the door of the library was opened, and the faithful butler, who had served his master for so many years, entered with trembling and hesitating step. He knew the exact situation of Sir Hugh and his daughter, and, exercising a liberty which his long services only might warrant, he had bethought him of a little stratagem to bring about, if possible, a reconciliation between them. The butler led a young child by the hand; tears again streamed down his honest face, as he gazed and gazed on the happy, rosy cherub by his side. The boy was about five years of age; and, without the knowledge of his parents, he had been brought from the carriage by the nurse. His sunny hair fell in a thousand little curls on his shoulders, and happiness, born of innocence, laughed in his merry blue eyes.

“Where is grandfather?” cried the child; “I long to see him, for mamma tells me I must love and honour him.”

“There, my dear, there is Sir Hugh!” said the old butler; and the boy instantly broke away from the man, and ran up to Sir Hugh, seizing him by the hand.

“Are you grandfather? bless you, grandfather! I

never saw you before, but I will love you as dearly as mamma does."

There is something so irresistible in the winning innocence of childhood, that callous indeed must be the heart which can remain untouched by its appeals. Even Sir Hugh, as his dim eyes met those of the little being whose pure and delicate frame was as a revived portion of his own, felt the iron of his soul give way. He gazed—bent forward—he drew the boy to him—a burning tear started, and silently coursed down his withered cheek—his head drooped lower and lower, and sob succeeded sob. No word escaped him: but he suddenly turned around, and seized Pellew by the hand, and the next moment that once stern, unyielding man, melted to forgiveness and love, folded his daughter to his breast.

THE INVITATION.

COME, come with me ! I have found a spot
Where the struggle and care of the world are not ;
A fairy spot, where nothing brings
The anxious thought of outward things ;
But the heart, like a sleeping infant, seems
To smile in the light of its worldless dreams.
It is a spot where over head
The forest beech and the elm-tree spread
Their feathered branches ; while below
Long tufted waving grasses grow,
And unnamed weeds, that interlace
Their varied leaves, with tangled grace ;
While tiny flowers peep out between
The meshes of their netted screen :
Pale, gentle flowers of modest dye,
 Like household virtues, coy retiring,
 Unenvious of the world's admiring ;
But paying well the curious eye

That bends observant of their worth,
To call their timid beauties forth.

Then come with me !

There, through the boughs, in sportive play,
The sunbeams strive to force their way,
And fall half-baffled, to the ground
Where light and shade lie shivered round :
And there the green-scaled beetle walks
Through the tall forest of the stalks ;
And there the glittering fly alights
To trim his wing for distant flights ;
And soon, his simple toilet done,
Shoots back into the joyous sun.
There, through the matted leaves, is heard
The twittering of the nestled bird ;
While near, her mate pours loud and strong
His broken burst of raptured song.
And there a little splashing brook
Comes bubbling from a shadowed nook,
And spreads its waters, till they make
The semblance of a fairy lake,
In which the mirrored earth and sky
Their own bright images espy ;
Until some wanton breeze shall pass,
And, mischief-loving, shake the glass ;

Lest beauty, too much rapture raising,
Should, like Narcissus, die of gazing !

Oh, come with me !

I have not told a soul the place ;

I would not other feet than ours
That nook of loveliness should trace,
And desecrate those silent bowers.

The heedless step, the careless eye,
The look that glanced and wandered by,
Would pain my heart with such a wound
As sacrilege to holy ground !

For in that solitary glade,
As stretched I lay beneath the shade,
It seemed as to my soul 'twere given
To bathe itself in dew's of heaven.

The troubled earth had passed away,
A dream without a trace remaining ;
Or rather, 'twas that earlier day
Ere sin and sorrow found their way

To the new world, its brightness staining ;
And I was in that land of bliss,
The Adam of the Paradise !
An Adam with a vacant breast,
That craved one joy to make it blest ;
For what were Eden's valleys fair
To him or me—till Eve was there ?

Then come with me !

Nay, do not smile, and feign to think
Youth's sunny spring is past for us ;
Nor say that years have dulled the link,
The shining link that binds us thus :
But come with me, and thou shalt hear
The vow that won thy maiden ear
Echo so true its early strain,
Thou shalt become a girl again !
Again be wooed, again be won,
And start to find what years are gone !
But look thou do not bring with thee
Those boisterous rogues that climb thy knee :
That spot is kept for thee alone ;
Their laughing voices' merry tone
Would scare its wordless charm, and chase
The brooding spirit of the place.
Enough for them the flowery lea,
The sunny empire of the bee,—
The springy turf, the sloping hill ;
There let them bound and shout their fill.
But thou and I will woo apart
The thoughtful rapture of the heart,
That bears it from the clods of earth
To the bright heaven of its birth.

Then come with me !

Yet, oh ! it is a fearful thing
That thus the very soul should cling

Around a being of the clay
That passes ere the passing day ?
To store in such a brittle urn
The oil from which our lamp must burn !
Thorns pierce the rosy chaplet through,
And he who loves must tremble too.
It is a thing for anxious fear,
 It is a thing for restless dread ;
What unseen perils hover near !
 How weak is that sustaining thread !
It is a thing for ceaseless prayer,
 Lest earth rob heaven of its part ;
And passion only prove a snare
 To raise an idol in the heart.
Come then with me, my gentle guide,
A warning angel by my side ;
Restrain the wayward steps that err,
My watchful guard, my counsellor,
 Oh, come with me !

THE OLD MAID.

BY MARY G. WELLS.

“If I had thought thou couldst have died,
I might not weep for thee,
But I forgot when by thy side
That thou couldst mortal be.”

WHEN I was about fourteen, my mother brought into our family a maiden lady, named Carrisbrooke, as a governess for myself and my younger sisters.

I had never indulged in the ungenerous prejudice, I may perhaps say, the antipathy which young people sometimes entertain against “*old maids*,” and if I had, I believe that my acquaintance with the charming woman of whom I speak would have entirely overcome so unjust a feeling.

Miss Carrisbrooke was one of the most fascinating persons I have ever known, and any description of mine can give but a faint idea of the perfect loveliness of her character. I soon loved her with all the frank and devoted affection which early youth is so prone to yield.

Her figure was graceful and well-formed, but I should suppose that even in her youth she could not have been called handsome, for her features were by no means regular, yet there was so much soul and sensibility in her face, that in my opinion it atoned for the want of more finely carved features ; but it was her *mental* beauty that won my admiration and my love.

Her temper was gentle but firm, and although there was much humility in her character, she commanded universal respect. Self was ever her last consideration ; she had not grown cold and callous because she was alone, and the love which if she had had any natural ties would have been consecrated to the *few* was now bestowed upon the *many*. Her charity was boundless ; not the charity which merely relieves the *wants*, but that which excuses and pities the *frailties* of our brethren. Her patience was extraordinary, and her integrity and truthfulness incomparable. Her talents were of no mean order, she sang with exquisite sweetness, and played the piano admirably. She drew and painted finely, and was well versed in the French, Spanish, and Italian languages, and yet amid all these accomplishments the useful part of her education had been by no means neglected.

But I will dwell no longer on my favourite theme—her perfections,—or my readers, who do not know her as I did, will grow weary.

I looked on her calm brow and read there the history

of a soul that had suffered and grown strong, whose "wild passion waves" were "lulled to rest." The habitual expression of her face was melancholy, and I felt that a "deep and a mighty shadow" had been cast upon the stream of her life, a shadow which might never wholly pass away. What her early trials had been, and above all, why so amiable a woman and one so well calculated to feel and to excite affection should have remained single, I often longed to know; but young and giddy as I was, I felt that the trials to which she never even slightly alluded must be sacred. When Miss Carrisbrooke had been with us about a year, she returned from a long walk one very warm day, and entering the dining-room, where I was sitting alone, she sank into a chair; and before I could inquire if she felt ill, she fainted. I hastily seized a glass of water from the beaufet and bathed her temples, I also unfastened her dress, and as I did so, the miniature of a young and very handsome man fell from her bosom. Much astonished, I picked it up and instead of replacing it in the folds of her dress, I laid it upon a table which stood near, and in my anxiety for her recovery I soon forgot it entirely.

Presently the colour returned to her lips and cheeks, her chest heaved, and with a long-drawn sigh she unclosed her eyes. Looking round she saw the miniature; she started and blushed; then observing my inquiring

look she said, "Dear Gertrude, you would know my history, and you shall."

A few days afterwards, Miss Carrisbrooke handed me a manuscript ; I opened it and read as follows :

"I have never known the tender love of a mother, or the care and protection of a father, for I had the misfortune to lose both my parents before I was four years old.

"I was brought up by my mother's sister, who was an elderly maiden lady. Aunt Rachael was a very good, kind woman, but like all human beings she had her failings, and the greatest of these was suspicion. She distrusted every one, and consequently she had no friends and but few acquaintances. Many years before, she had been cruelly deceived by the two beings she loved best in the world—her lover and her bosom friend. Thenceforward, she became cold and suspicious : once she had been all frankness and confidence, now she was all reserve and distrust.

"I believe she loved *me* very much, but she never kissed or caressed me, or called me by endearing names. My own disposition being naturally frank and affectionate, I deeply felt the want of that tenderness which, in childhood or in womanhood, is so necessary to the female heart. I loved my aunt, but her coldness made me also fear her, and in her presence I never failed to experience a feeling of restraint.

“I was not generally allowed to mingle with those of my own age, and never walked out unaccompanied by my aunt or the nurse who had tended me when an infant.

“There were two or three families with whom my aunt kept up a limited intercourse; with them I was sometimes permitted to spend a day, but precisely at eight o'clock, in summer or winter, the nurse came in a carriage to conduct me home. I never went to school; my aunt engaged various teachers to instruct me in the house, and I received a liberal education. But for this, I think I should have been unhappy, as I was denied an intercourse with those of my own age, and was not allowed any of the amusements which delight the young: but my music and my studies afforded me employment and tranquil pleasure. Thus the time passed serenely until I reached my eighteenth year, when an event occurred which changed the whole tenor of my life.

“One Sabbath day in winter, as Aunt Rachael and I were descending the church steps, her foot slipped, and she fell with much violence. I uttered a scream of terror, and several persons came to our assistance. The foremost of these was a young gentleman, who carefully raised my aunt and lifted her into the carriage of a friend, which was immediately offered; it appeared that her arm was broken below the elbow; so, placing her in the most comfortable position that circumstances permitted,

he inquired our address and then went in search of a surgeon, whilst we proceeded homewards.

“The surgeon soon arrived, accompanied by the gentleman, who stayed until the painful operation of setting the bone was completed ; he then took his departure, having respectfully requested permission to call again and inquire after Miss Langley’s health. Before leaving, he handed me his card ; it bore the name of Edward Vivian, a name to which we were no strangers.

“The Vivians were a highly respectable, and very wealthy family who lived but a short distance from our house.

“The next day, Mr. Vivian called, and the next and for many succeeding ones ; for my aunt suffered a great deal, and the bone was a long time knitting. Edward Vivian and I were friends from the first hour that we met, and strange to say, Aunt Rachael did not object to our intimacy ; indeed the goodness and frankness of his character seemed to impress her at once, and to disarm a great deal of her coldness and distrust.

“Edward was exceedingly handsome, and it may be that my own want of beauty made me more highly value the glorious gift that was his. But young as I was, I think his personal attractions alone could not have gained my love, unaccompanied by the cultivated mind and moral goodness. It was not so much the *beauty* of the large, lustrous, dark eyes that spoke to my

heart, as the kindness and frankness that ever beamed in them, and the words that fell from a mouth perfect as Cupid's bow would have been unheard had they not spoken the thoughts of a noble mind.

“ Now, I was perfectly happy : the so much sought for sympathy I had found, and the human love for which my soul had yearned was mine. I had now some one to whom to communicate my thoughts, my fears, and my hopes, and to understand my day-dreams and my youthful enthusiasm. Thus a year of unclouded felicity passed by.

“ When I look back upon that period of my life it seems like beholding a smiling landscape ;—no cloud obscured the brightness of the sky, not the slightest breeze ruffled the calm surface of the lake.

“ Aunt Rachael gave her consent to our union, and the day was fixed.

“ Edward naturally possessed great equanimity, and he always maintained a calm cheerfulness which was in the highest degree beneficial to me ; as it served at times to moderate my exuberant spirits, and at others, to sustain me when I was inclined to sad reflections which would sometimes intrude, for my happiness seemed to me more than I merited, too great to be lasting.

“ During the last month or two before the time appointed for our marriage, I had observed a change in my

lover ; he was at times so gay, so noisily joyous, as to startle me : at others, he indulged in the most gloomy forebodings, and for several successive days he would be oppressed by the deepest dejection, from which I in vain strove to rouse him. Meantime his cheek grew pale and his step heavy, yet he would not confess that he was ill.

“ *Indifferent* persons might have seen no change, and laughed at my fears, but *I* watched with the anxious eye of love, and the symptoms that I noted, filled me with sorrow and alarm.

“ At length, yielding to my urgent entreaties, and more to satisfy me, than himself, Edward consulted a physician, who pronounced him to be labouring under a disease of the heart, from which however he was told that he need apprehend no immediate danger.

“ One evening, Edward and I sat near the back-parlour window discoursing of the happy future. The window near which we sat overlooked a large and beautiful garden : it was a lovely night ; the gentle breeze that just stirred the short clustering curls on Edward's brow came to us laden with the odorous breath of a thousand flowers, and I thought that the pale stars and even Dian herself looked down sadly but sweetly upon our love. I was beginning to express this thought to Edward when suddenly the hand which held mine grew

cold and relaxed its clasp ; filled with a vague terror, I turned to look in his face, and, merciful Heaven ! the beautiful eyes that had gazed so lovingly into mine were closed for ever, the pallor of death had overspread the face so lately beaming with hope and life ! I uttered one long, loud scream of agony and fainted.

“ Blissful unconsciousness—alas, it was of too short duration ! All too quickly did I return to a sense of my sudden and terrible bereavement. At first, I could not realize the full extent of my misfortune ; I was stupified, bewildered. The life of my life was no more, the voice that had spoken to me of hope and happiness was stilled for ever. I must tread alone the path of existence, whilst the strong arm that would have been my stay mouldered in the grave ;—I *knew* all this and yet I could not *believe* it. I looked upon the pale face of the dead, and I could not persuade myself that in the coffin and the grave-clothes I beheld all that remained of him who was lately so full of life and health.

“ Whether we weep or are glad, time passes on. At length the dreadful burial-day came, and I looked for the last time upon the face that I should never again behold on earth. Oh, what a deep and bitter agony filled my heart, and yet it did not break—alas, we cannot so easily be relieved of our grief as to die with those we love !

“Its first deep sorrow falls with a crushing weight upon the young spirit. In after years, other and as heavy trials may come, but they want the novelty that adds such poignancy to the first.

“For weeks, I wept myself to sleep, and when I waked it was with heavy sighs and a fresh burst of grief.

“Then all was night ; the darkness of my own soul lent its hue to surrounding objects ; I looked abroad upon the fair earth, the sunshine and the blue sky, and they seemed to have lost their beauty and their brightness. The sound of merry voices fell gratingly upon my ear, and the sight of joyous faces sent a painful thrill through my heart. I wondered that any one could take pleasure in the existence which to me seemed so miserable.

“But at length a better frame of mind came, and I mourned no longer as one without hope : in the cheering thought of meeting my lost Edward in a happier world, I struggled with my grief.

“Time, ‘the great physician’ who can heal the deepest wounds and blunt the edge of the keenest sorrows, brought serenity and resignation, if not cheerfulness.

“My aunt’s little fortune and mine were in bank-stock ; and about three years after Edward’s death, we had the misfortune to lose it all through the failure of the bank.

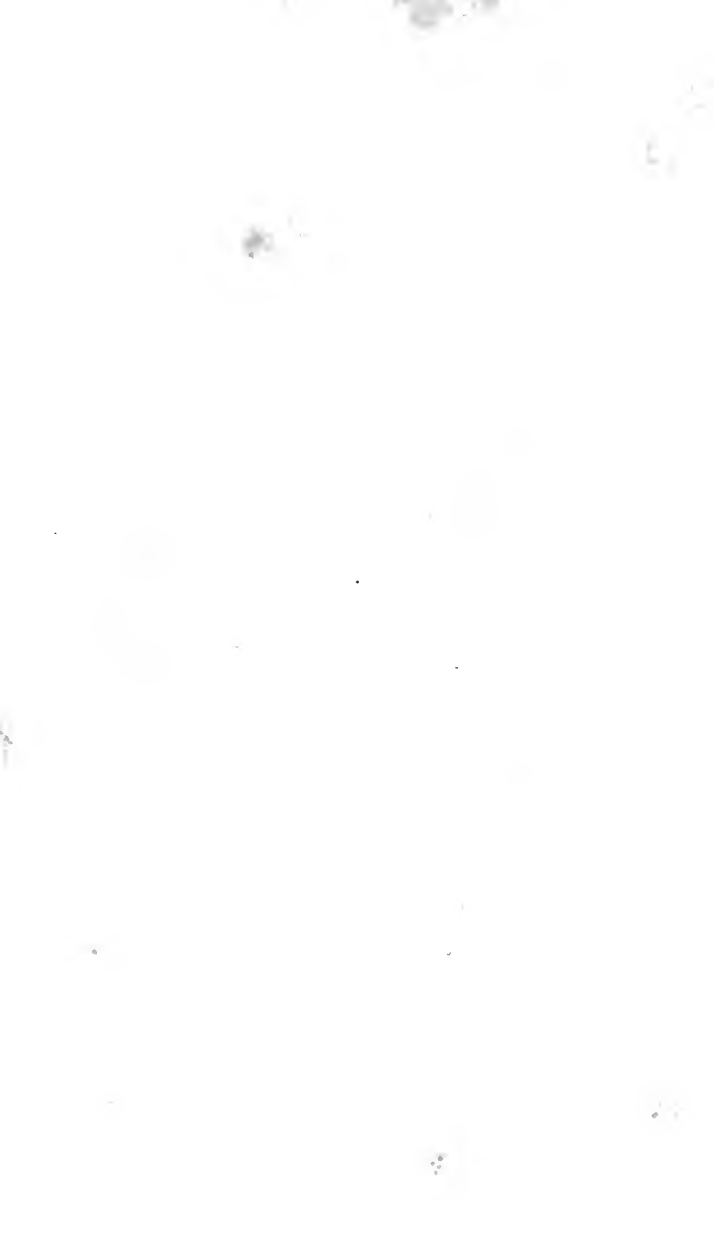
“Calamities are great or small by comparison, and the one great trial of my life made all others sink into insignificance. I received the news of our loss with a calmness which astonished even myself. It was, however, a severe blow to my aunt, who, in the decline of life, saw herself reduced almost to beggary; for all that she now possessed was the house in which we lived. I revolved many plans in my mind for our future subsistence, and when I had well matured them, communicated them to my aunt. I proposed that she should rent a smaller house and sell her own, the money for which, added to what I could earn by teaching music and drawing, would keep us comfortably.

“At first my aunt was violently opposed to my being a teacher, but I at length induced her to listen to reason, and succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations in my new vocation.

“About five years since, my aunt died, and I was left entirely alone. A kind friend of mine needed a governess for her daughter; I offered my services and they were accepted. I stayed with Mrs. Wallace until my pupil married; she then, as you know, recommended me to your mother, for I still desired to be a governess in a private family, preferring it to teaching out of doors, and wishing to lay by a little store for my old age.

“You may perhaps wonder that with my disposition

I have never married. Since Edward's death I have had several offers from men far above me in my present situation, men whom I must respect and esteem, but I can never love again ; my heart lies buried in the grave of my first—last love ! And, Gertrude, need I say that I shall die an ' Old Maid ? ' ”





ALEXINA.

WIDE over the Ægean Sea
The summer breezes play ;
The silver-belted Cyclades
Are musical with spray ;

And hues as soft as memory sheds
Pour over grove and fane,
As blushing Vesper follows, coy
The Sun beneath the main.

And full as calm the marble brow
Of that pensive Grecian maid,
As day's last smile on each sunny isle,
When twilight glories fade.

Young Alexina muses on
The rover of the wave ;
The gentle and the beautiful
Dreams of the bold and brave.

And soft as moonbeams resting on
The shadow of a cloud,
The light of love is brimming o'er
Those eyes so darkly browed.

'Twere vain to pray that storms should ne'er
Deform that summer sea,
Nor may we hope to guard thee from
The ills of all that be :

But when on thee and thine descends
The purifying shower,
May no loud thunder jar thy heaven,
Or scathing lightning's power.

THE OLD GENTLEMAN'S PENCIL.

BY T. E. WILKS, ESQ.

THE day that witnessed the arrival of Ernest Hartmann in the gay and magnificent city of Florence was as bright without as his bosom was dark within. Ernest was a German by birth, a traveller by habit, and an artist by profession. His master, when he dismissed his pupil, told him that he drew superbly, and coloured better: *he* quite agreed with the worthy old man, and imagined himself a Claude in landscape, a Salvator Rosa in grouping and imagination, a Vandyke in portraits. Certain it is, that, having with immense labour and trouble painted an altar-piece, representing St. Michael destroying the serpent of evil, which he could not dispose of, it was with infinite grace presented to the pastor of his native village, and forthwith decorated the walls of its time-worn church. This had hitherto been his greatest exploit in painting, but it was with anticipations of complete success, his fertile imagination teeming with visions of present wealth and enjoyment, of evergreen laurels, to great fame, and certain im-

mortality, that he rushed to Italy, to cope with her favoured sons. How amazingly commerce with the world represses the warm imaginings of youth!—it is like the art of the Mussulman, who cools his sherbet with snow. Ernest soon found that he was mistaken; that self-conceit did not always betoken real talent; that his best efforts, albeit admired in an obscure German village, were far, very far inferior to the worst of those which he had so vainly imagined he should rival; and that, did he wish to remain in Italy, he must either commence the toilsome task of renewing the study of his profession from its earliest stage, and with all its drudgery, or at once relinquish his beloved art, and seek some other means of procuring a subsistence. After a lengthened consideration, he determined for a brief period to do neither the one nor the other: with palette at his back, he travelled through great part of the country of the vine and the orange; he visited Naples, wondered at Vesuvius, gazed with rapture upon the spreading Bay, and longed to enter into the pleasures of the city without being able to do so. He rambled to Milan, thence to Venice, and lastly, as we have seen, to Florence, where he arrived with a purse exhausted to the dregs, a head aching with disappointment and fatigue, a sun blazing like some huge furnace above him, a scene like fairy land around him, and a prospect of having nothing to eat before him.

Ernest was fain to procure a very obscure lodging in a very wretched part of the suburbs, and here he vegetated rather than lived for several days, until something very much akin to despair visited his bosom, and lurked in his bright but downcast eye. Ernest was sitting one morning in deep meditation on a three-legged stool, contemplating an unfinished picture on his easel, when the door of his dormitory suddenly opened, and a respectable-looking old gentleman entered. This personage was dressed in black, and he carried in his hand an ebony stick; but, while the wrinkles on his brow told of age, his piercing eye convinced those who gazed on him that, though his body might be enfeebled by the great conqueror, his mind retained its pristine vigour. Ernest started from his seat, and, having bowed with some surprise, begged to know what were his commands.

“Signor Ernest,” he began, “I have long watched you toiling towards rank and eminence, and have long regretted the slowness of your progress.” Ernest bowed. “I now come to congratulate you on the near approach you have at last made to the object of your wishes.” Ernest bowed still lower, and cast an inquisitive glance around the wretched apartment, as though seeking to discover tokens of the good fortune upon which he had been congratulated: nothing, however, met his inquiring glance but proofs irrefragable of poverty and neglect.

The old gentleman resumed. "I have long been employed in framing a gift worthy of your acceptance, and have at length succeeded. I pray you take this pencil," and he drew from under his cloak an instrument formed of cedar wood, in shape not unlike a common ruler, save that, at one end sharpened to a point, it formed a drawing pencil, and at the other, a small portion of camel's hair constituted a painting brush. "With this inestimable treasure in your possession, it is a task easy of performance to surpass every painter that ever breathed or breathes. Sketch with the pointed end, paint with the other; the design, the execution, the colouring, all, all will proceed spontaneously, and, guided by your wishes, unrivalled will be your productions, while you, inheriting the fame, and reaping the profit, will merely be the actor of a mechanical motion."

Ernest listened with great astonishment, but still more incredulity, to this strange address, and when it was finished, laughed aloud. The old gentleman seemed rather offended. "If you doubt me, if you question the efficacy of the pencil, put it at once to the test; there is canvass ready on your easel."

"Signor, I thank you," replied Ernest, still smiling; "but, do you think me so silly as to suppose that, did this strangely-formed instrument really possess the

qualities you describe, you would so readily give it away?"

"Never heed what my motives may be," answered the old gentleman; "I have told you that I merely desire to witness your advancement; that is a very polite reason to assign, surely, and with it you should be satisfied. I have only one condition to require from you, and that is, that you will never either sell it or give it away. Promise me this, and the pencil is yours."

"Am I awake or dreaming?" queried Ernest. No, it was not a dream: there sat the old gentleman, his white locks overshadowing a countenance full of some indescribable expression: there lay the means whereby to procure the dearest wishes of his heart—ay, and of every other heart—wealth, and fame, and honours—and around him were the broken walls of a chamber which he might, if he wished it, now change for a palace. "It is not a dream," concluded Ernest, "but a very singular reality." He was not long in deciding what to do. "I am in honour bound," he considered, "not to part with this gift, to say nothing of self-interest in retaining it. The only request, therefore, that the donor makes, is one which demands no sacrifice in the compliance." There are very few who would not so have argued—nevertheless, the natural question, "Who is this old gentleman?" suggested itself, and spoke openly in the ensuing remark.

“But, are there no other conditions?”

“None, whatever,” answered his visiter; “a careful fulfilment of the one I have named is all that I require. Come, Signor Ernest, say at once whether you will accept my gift. I have other business which calls me away; and, remember that this is a matter regarding only your own interest.”

“I do accept it, then,” cried Ernest eagerly, “and for it return a thousand thanks.” He could not say less than a thousand under the circumstances.

“Then, farewell, Signor,” said the stranger, rising from the stool, whereon he had without heeding formal rules quietly seated himself. “I wish you every happiness, and doubt not that on some future occasion we shall meet again.”

“I heartily trust so, Signor,” Ernest replied: he could not say less under the circumstances; nevertheless, it was a great falsehood. However, it pleased the old gentleman perhaps all the better for being a falsehood. Making a polite bow, the latter took his leave, and Ernest, darting to his unfinished painting, eagerly tried the powers of his new acquisition. It was indeed everything that had been described; figures, foreground, perspective, sky, all sprang from the magic instrument: in less time than it required for his imagination to conceive a single figure, all was completed, the colours dry, the design and effect brilliant and unrivalled.

Imagine a poor briefless barrister, dining on a chop with no wine, suddenly created and gazetted as Lord Chancellor: or an unfortunate Welsh curate, with a small stipend of thirty pounds a year, and a large family of half as many children, suddenly called upon to take possession of that choice piece of church preferment, yeleft the bishopric of Durham: or picture to yourself a wretched creature of a midshipman, who has seen himself described as such until he begins to doubt whether promotion to him is not an "airy nothing," suddenly called upon to carry "the red flag at the fore;" or suppose any other change equally sudden and equally great, and you will discover something like the feelings of Ernest Hartmann.

Habits and manners may be dissimilar, garments may be differently formed and differently worn, complexions may be unlike, and features may vary; but, in all cases, in all nations, and under all circumstances, the human heart remains similarly constituted. The inhabitants of Florence, like those of London, are guided solely by omnipotent Fashion. Fashion is the sun of poets and painters: when the one writes of Fortune, or the other portrays her, they ought to represent her with a silly expression of countenance, and place in her hand a rattle, for Fashion to all the rest of the world is Fortune to them. Fashion, wonderful dame! it is that makes or mars them; talent is of secondary importance;

Fashion possesses power as extensive as it is arbitrary. Fashion caught hold of the hand of Ernest Hartmann, and carried him with her to rank and eminence.

Had the wonderful paintings which Ernest sent forth to the world been merely the productions of his own genius, it is five hundred chances to one that he would have remained in wretched poverty and gloomy obscurity during life, and been immortalized after death like—how many?—but with him the case was different: the magic pencil wrought wonders, not merely on canvass, but on the inhabitants of Florence. The Grand Duke visited the *atelier* of Ernest Hartmann; the Grand Duke, with vast taste, admired a superb painting of the Madonna, and, as the Grand Duke did not offer to buy it, Ernest humbly begged his acceptance of the “trifle” which he had been pleased to honour with his approval. The Grand Duke graciously deigned to accept as a gift that which he was too poor to purchase, and the next day Ernest received a patent of nobility, and became Italianized under the title of Count Aldini. What a fine world we live in! merit is always rewarded!

A year and a day after his first visit, the old gentleman called again upon Ernest Hartmann, but, during that period, his gift—as indeed all gifts do—had worked a strange alteration. Count Ernest Aldini was the envy and admiration of all Florence. All the artists envied him, for his paintings surpassed theirs as much as the

president's "last" surpasses the daub before a village alehouse—and where there is superiority there must be envy—let the flatterers of human nature call it emulation or whatever else they please. The ancient *noblesse* envied him, because, without possessing their pedigrees, he was more popular: wealth will always exercise more sway with the foolish than rank, ay, or with the wise, for the most part, either. The rich envied him, because he equalled them in their expenditure and magnificence, but with this essential difference, that, while they injured their estates to cope with him, a few hours in his *atelier* would serve to reimburse him for weeks of dissipation. The poor envied him, because the poor always did, and always will, envy the wealthy: the poor ever imagine that happiness mainly consists in possessing wealth, the rich *know* to the contrary: neither will ever convince the other; so, thus thinking, will both high and low jog on to eternity.

In spite of all this envy, Ernest commanded admiration—his talents from the few, his profusion from the many, his generosity from all. Count Aldini had the most luxurious palazzo in sunny Florence; Count Aldini was an especial favourite with the Grand Duke; Count Aldini was smiled upon by every lady in Florence, and his acquaintance sought by every gentleman distinguished by rank, by fame, or by talents, from the common herd.

Every one wondered much and often why Count Aldini wore a shade upon his brow, and why he never seemed to partake with the elasticity or buoyancy of youth in the varied pleasures which danced around him. Could they have penetrated his heart, and seen what feelings lurked within it, few would have envied him his good fortune, still fewer been found willing to exchange their griefs and their joys for his.

It was precisely a year and a day after he had first possessed the strange charm which produced these changes, that, one hour before midnight, Ernest left the polished circle, of which he was regarded as the very life, hurried home to his spacious palazzo, sought his studio, and, having closed the door, paced dejectedly up and down the apartment.

“What a strange existence is mine!” he muttered, “thus suddenly lifted to the enjoyment of all that this world affords of luxury, by means of a supernatural gift—from—whom? Alas, from one whose slave I fear I must become. Wretch that I am!” and he paused before the easel, and gazed upon the painting that it supported. “The dread of what is to follow destroys every present enjoyment, and fills my soul with horror and despair.” The painting represented with fearful accuracy the terrors and sufferings of a place of torment in another world, and, guided by the feelings which so strongly actuated him, the painter had bestowed his own

likeness upon one of the principal figures, which appeared surrounded by the ministers of vengeance in the foreground of the design. "Yes," the artist mournfully continued, "such, such will be my doom; and what have I received in exchange? A gift," and he drew forth the pencil, "the possession of which renders me wretched, and yet with which I cannot—dare not—part."

The distant clock tolled forth twelve; the artist paused to count the dull heavy sounds, as they fell upon the silent ear of night. The moon became suddenly shrouded in gloomy clouds, the lamps burned but dimly, the door opened, and the old gentleman entered.

A withering sensation of fear thrilled the bosom of Ernest; the old gentleman bent profoundly, and then unbidden seated himself on a splendid ottoman.

"Permit me," he said calmly, "permit me, Sir Count, to congratulate you on your well-deserved good fortune: —*talents*"—and he smiled sarcastically—"talents like yours deserve suitable encouragement. But you look pale," soothingly; "are you unhappy, or is it merely the weariness which results from past enjoyment that oppresses you?"

"I—I am wretched!" burst from the lips of Ernest.

"Indeed! Can I remedy your causes of grief? Surely your pencil fails not of its wonted effect?"

"No—no—it is not that. I scarcely can tell you, scarcely describe even to myself what it is that op-

presses me. I seem to bear a charmed life ; content flies my bosom ; strange fears haunt me ; and I dread—I know not what.”

The old gentleman smiled.

“Then, when I enter a cathedral, and would pray, my thoughts become confused, and, feeling like a wretch guilty of heinous sins, I rush from the sacred pile in wild despair.”

The old gentleman took a pinch of snuff from an ebony snuff-box, then handed the latter to Ernest : it contained black rappee, mixed with scented Scotch. Ernest declined the offered courtesy.

“Is this all that oppresses you ? Is this all that paints your cheek with pearl powder, and your brow with Indian ink ?”

“All ? Yes ; is it not enough ?”

“No,” said the old gentleman, composedly taking another pinch ; “they are nothings, unworthy the notice of a man of sense. You must, however, permit me to contradict your last assertion ; these things are *not* the sole sources of your grief.”

Ernest blushed deep crimson. The old gentleman looked not at him—gentlemen don’t like to be looked at when they blush, and his elderly friend was aware of it.

The fact was, that Count Aldini was not the painter Ernest, who had entered Florence a year and a week

before. There are few men who can bear great and sudden prosperity with an even mind : one it will sway into the paths of vice ; another it will drive to madness ; a third will become absurdly proud ; a fourth it will utterly destroy ; a fifth it *may* render grateful and virtuous. N. B., the last is a rare phenomenon. It is some praise to Ernest that his prosperity had not betrayed him into any great crime ; but, although his conscience was not burdened very heavily, his moral character had undergone a change. He was haughty and proud, too, of his imaginary talents ; (how many there are in this world proud of that for which they ought most to blush !) he had likewise become reckless in his disposition, and, regarding himself already as a victim to supernatural agency, scarcely hesitated to look on crimes of a heinous character without distaste.

“The real case is this,” resumed the old gentleman, after a brief pause ; “you have fallen in love with the beauteous daughter of the Marchese di Santo Giuliano, and know not how to inspire her fair bosom with a corresponding passion.” Ernest blushed again. “It is this which gives you more pain than all the rest of your *troubles*,” with a slight sneer.

The old gentleman was perfectly right in supposing that the circumstance which he specified was the cause of many uneasy sensations in the breast of Ernest, but the latter portion of his speech was not equally correct. Ernest

had passed the earlier part of his life in too religious a manner not to feel many severe qualms of conscience at so complete a change in his circumstances. There was a slight pause.

"The pencil will assist you," said the old gentleman.

"The pencil?"

"Ay, where is it?"

Ernest handed it to him. The old gentleman unscrewed it about the centre, although Ernest had never previously observed the slightest appearance of a crack, and drew from the hollow within it a small phial containing liquid of a dark red colour.

"Of course you are aware," said the old gentleman coolly, as he drew the cork from the phial, and applied it to his nose, apparently to ascertain whether the contents were in right order, "of course, with your keen perception, you must be aware that the Signora Aloysia loves another?"

"I have imagined," said Ernest—while a dark shade gathered on his brow—"that she loved her father's *protégé*, the young Antonio; but to her union with him the Marchese would never consent."

"I am not so certain of that," rejoined the gentleman with the white hair; "indeed I know that he has some doubts at this moment upon his mind as to whether he shall not at once consent to their marriage."

“Ha!”

“Even so; and, were it otherwise, we must commence our operations with Antonio; he is a formidable barrier in our progress to the heart of the beautiful Aloysia.”

“But then her father,” said Ernest despondingly, “would never consent to her wedding an artist, however wealthy or deserving.”

The old gentleman smiled.

“The Marchese, with all his pomp and pride, is poor—very poor—pride, pomp, and poverty, what a funny combination!” and the old gentleman chuckled inwardly and heartily, although Ernest could not see much in the joke; but, presently subduing his merriment, he proceeded, “The Marchese is very poor, and yet loves gaming as well as you do his daughter.”

“Well,” said Ernest.

“Well,” said the old gentleman, and then he took another pinch of snuff, “the pencil will assist you.”

He had unscrewed this mystic gift into two parts—from the one he had taken the phial, from the other he now shook forth a pair of dice.

“Go to-morrow evening to his palazzo; you will find him alone; ply him with wine, and then propose play; substitute these dice for those which he will produce; you must win, ay, and largely; and, belike, he cannot pay you. You must take his daughter in lieu of the gold

you do not want, and as for Antonio—when next you meet him, infuse the contents of this phial into his wine and my life on't Aloysia is yours before the month is gone."

"Murder !" muttered Ernest.

"Nonsense," said the old gentleman ; "do as I bid you, and fear not for the result ; only beware ye part not with the pencil." He screwed together the parts of the pencil, returned it to Ernest, and then rose from his seat.

"Is there no other way ?" said Ernest.

"None," said the old gentleman. "Come, you are a lover ; wish ye not to know how your idol is employed ? Stretch forth the canvass and exercise your pencil."

Mechanically, Ernest did as he was bidden. A wide-spreading, luxuriant garden appeared to flow from the teeming brush ; the gentle moonlight glowed on every tree, through every bush ; and in an alcove sat the fair Aloysia, whilst, by her side, the young Antonio, with lute in hand, appeared to tell his love in impassioned melody.

"Confusion !"

"Such joys," said the old gentleman, "should be thine."

"And shall !" cried Ernest.

The old gentleman smiled.

“Farewell,” said the latter; “follow my advice, and when next we meet, I shall hail the lovely Signora Aloysia as the happy bride of the painter, Ernest. Adieu;” and so saying, he glanced with evident delight upon the representation of Pandemonium, which had arisen from the painter’s morbid imagination, bowed very politely, and forthwith departed.

Ernest stood as though transfixed, with the pencil in his hand, and his eyes riveted on the eloquent painting before him. Suddenly his hesitation seemed to vanish.

“It shall be done!” He looked at the phial and then at the dice, carefully examined them, and then safely lodged them in a secret cabinet. Ernest pressed his hand against his burning forehead, and, in an almost utter exhaustion of mind, threw himself upon a couch—but not to sleep. Slumber flew far from his resting-place, or if, for a few moments, his wearied eyelids closed, dreams of so fearful a nature presented themselves, that it was a relief to wake again. He fancied that every face he beheld resembled that of the old gentleman, that every figure displayed his thin and emaciated yet nervous frame. Now he would grin on the uneasy sleeper with wild delight, then regard him with anxiety, anon with dismay, and lastly with fiendish rage and hate.

Morning at length dawned. Morning! bright Morning! the blessings of millions hail thee—the songs of gay and happy warblers welcome thee—all nature

greet thee with a strong and fervent joy! The lark rises to meet thee and pour forth his hymn of praise—for thee is the dewy breast of the night-closed flower unrobed—and to thee man owes his release from midnight terrors and midnight gloom. Blessings on thee, bright and beautiful as thou art.

Ernest sprang with joy from his restless couch, and, his mind surcharged with visions of past horrors, prepared to pass in the usual manner the day destined to usher in a night of crimes. The morning repast despatched, he again essayed the powers of his magic pencil; suddenly he flung the instrument from him with vehemence, and threw himself distractedly into a chair.

“What am I about to do?” he muttered; “resign all hopes of future happiness!—for what? For the purpose of rendering one person to death, another to crime, and a third to misery! This is terrible! I will not do it. My loved, my gentle Elsi yet pants for my return to my native village, and I will return; in the days of my poverty we exchanged vows, which, in the hour of prosperity, shall be fulfilled. Ah! last night the magic pencil brought to my view the Signora Aloysia; let me now see whether it will not present me with the form of Elsi. Yes, I shall see how she is engaged, and perhaps, perhaps, find her praying for one who has so long for-

gotten her." Thus saying, he crossed the studio, and picked up his charmed pencil.

He passed it over the canvass, and anon there appeared the interior of an humble dwelling; in the foreground, engaged at a spinning-wheel, sat a fair young girl, just brightening into womanhood, the very *beau ideal* of laughing beauty mingled with sensibility. Near her sat a youth, who, with hurried gesture and anxious look, was evidently pleading a tale of love, while she, with smiles that seemed to mock his earnestness, evidently listened to the rustic with joyous and participating feelings.

"Oh horror!" shouted the painter, "what do I see? Elsi unfaithful? Ay, there she sits, while the very man whose addresses she has so often told me she hated pleads his cause of love, and is tacitly encouraged. This has decided me—Aloysia shall be mine—in my arms she will speedily forget the idiot Antonio."

The day is passed much in the same way in all parts of the civilized world. The poor labour—the wealthy idle—the young anticipate with glee—the old look back with regret—Death seizes on all alike! So passed that day in Florence; in the morning the grand and solemn service in the churches attracted the religious, whether so in fact, or merely in appearance; afterwards the gay and crowded streets delighted the idler; then came the siesta, full of charms to the indolent; while the varied

delights of a bright Italian evening closed a day of mingled mirth and grief, laughter and weeping, life and death.

It was evening when the Count Aldini wended his way to the palazzo di Santo Giuliano; and, as he sought the most retired path, and with moody, half-concealed countenance, evaded the inquiring glance and recognition of those who knew him, strange thoughts flitted across his brain. "What a tangled web is human life!" he thought, as he reflected upon the events of his own past existence; and lo! a commentary presented itself. At the termination of the court which he was traversing were two houses in juxtaposition—from one came forth the sound of mandolins and of young clear voices singing love ditties—from the other issued the wail of sorrow, the sob of anguish, the gasp of despair! In the former house all was joy and merriment, for it was the anniversary of a young girl's birthday, and her companions had assembled round her, and crowned her with flowers, and proclaimed her queen of the night: in the other habitation there were but two persons, and of these one "slept the sleep which knows no waking;" the other was a female, about the same age as her more favoured neighbour. She had no flowers twined round her brow, but her long black hair hung negligently over her shoulders, as she knelt by the side of the dead, and mourned the loss of the only being who

had ever loved her, of the only friend she had ever known.

“Life is indeed a tangled web!” repeated the Count Aldini, as he drew his gorgeous cloak closer around him, and, turning from the house of mourning, quickened his footsteps—“and he is most wise who grasps all offered benefits—little time is there to be wasted, truly.” It is impossible to say what species of logic the Count employed to obtain that deduction—suffice it that he was at that moment a most worthy disciple of his elderly friend.

Arrived at the palazzo, the Count Aldini was ushered into a splendidly furnished saloon, where the Marchese, a man of haughty bearing, rose to receive his distinguished guest. Talent in Italy is a sure admission to the circles of rank and fashion; it was honour to be known to the painter Ernest, and the Marchese greeted his presence with respect. Servitors brought in chocolate, and the Marchese proposed to while away an hour in play. Ernest willingly consented, and, in a few moments, the magic dice were substituted for those produced. Well performed they the work marked out for them! Swiftly passed the ruddy gold from the agitated Marchese to his fortunate antagonist, and at length the sum he had lost became frightfully large.

“Sir Count, you are lucky; that last stake was of some magnitude—let us double it and try again,” and

a faint, sickly smile played over his features ; he intended the smile to be of mirth—it was of agony.

“ Agreed.”

The nobleman rattled the dice and threw : the painter won.

“ Confusion !”

“ Will your excellenza try once more ?”

“ No, Sir Ernest ; we will settle accounts.”

“ As your excellenza pleases.”

The Marchese paced the room hurriedly for a few moments, and then turned to Ernest.

“ I know not by what chance it is, Count, that I have thus lost my usual good fortune : suffice it, I owe you a sum, the extent of which renders present payment impossible.”

Had the Marchese been stretched upon the rack, he could scarcely have suffered more than he did at that moment from wounded pride. Ernest, who was not made for a villain, hardly suffered less ; he hastened to reply.

“ My noble patron, say not another word”—he paused ; then “ there is one condition on which I swear never again to mention this hateful subject, never to demand the sum which *chance*”—he shuddered—“ has won for me !”

“ A condition ?” said the Florentine ; “ name it.”

"Give me your daughter for a bride. Suffer that fair and beauteous lady to become the Countess Aldini."

"How! Sir painter, are you mad?"

"No, Marchese, nor ask I any unreasonable condition. I shall not be the first whose *talents*"—he shuddered again—"have procured him a noble bride. What say ye!"

The Marchese resumed his hurried walk to and fro for a short period, then turned and grasped the hand of Ernest.

"She is thine!" He left the room.

"Joy! Joy!" exclaimed the artist; "she will be mine!—she will obey her father's behest, and the dread crime of murder will be spared me."

A half-stifled laugh reached his wondering ear—he hastily turned, and there, close at his elbow, stood—the old gentleman!

"What sophistry!" said the latter, in his calm, unmoved voice. "If necessary, you have resolved to commit this deed; but if you find you can accomplish your purpose without doing so, why then you felicitate yourself on its non-performance, and I suppose deem yourself as innocent as though you had never dreamed of the crime. This is a sophistry of my own peculiar invention, and I can assure you it is much encouraged and admired by some of my pupils, to whom I recommend it as sound logic; you it is unnecessary to deceive

in that way, and I will tell you why." The old gentleman paused and refreshed himself, after this long speech, with a very ample pinch of snuff. Then he resumed thus.

"The fact is, that in this case you are too early with your self-gratulations : the deed, as I told you, must be done. Aloysia will apparently consent to marry you, but it will be mere outward seeming ; she has agreed to elope this very night from Florence with Antonio. As I passed through the garden just now, I heard the proposal made and agreed to."

"You ? you heard it made ?"

"Yes ; in fact, to speak truth, I told Antonio to propose it."

"You ! and is this your friendship for me ?"

"Friendship !" said the old gentleman ; and then he smiled, and then he took another pinch of snuff—"recollect, I must attend to my own interest."

I suspect that there are a great many in the world, like the old gentleman, very willing to befriend another as long as it agrees with their own interest or gratifies their innate love of ostentation, but equally willing to sacrifice their friend the moment that his welfare interferes with their own selfish desires.

"Do as I bid you," said Ernest's elderly acquaintance ; "in a few minutes Antonio will be here. Re-

member, the entire success of your wishes depends upon his drinking the contents of the phial."

The old gentleman walked away, and Ernest felt relieved by his absence.

"It must be done," murmured Ernest mentally; "I never can live to see her the bride of another."

The folding doors fell back, and the Marchese re-entered, leading by the hand the fair cause of our painter's solicitude and crime. She was indeed very beautiful, but the fiend, Care, had already enthroned himself on her marble forehead. I wonder whether there is a single brow in the world entirely destitute of care.

"Count Aldini," said the Marchese, "my daughter accepts your proffered alliance."

"Signora," eagerly exclaimed Ernest, "accept my warmest thanks for this kind approval—my future life shall show——"

"Hold, Signor!" interrupted the lady—and, although her increasing paleness proved her deep agitation, her voice faltered not in its tone. "It is but just I should inform you that though I become your wife to shield my father from dishonour—for, Signor, I know all"—Ernest blushed for very shame—"my heart is in the keeping of—of—another."

The heart of Ernest smote him; but the sensation quickly subsided, for the old gentleman whispered in

his ear, "She but deceives you, and has resolved to fly this night with Antonio." Ernest smiled inwardly, advanced, and took her hand.

"Fair Signora, I fear not but that my constant love will eventually win for me in return that precious boon—thine own."

He seated himself on a couch by the side of the Signora, and servitors brought wine; whilst in ill-digested and hurried words he sought to convince the fair one of his love. Little, however, heeded she his disjointed sentences or honeyed language; her thoughts were evidently away from him; her eyes were fixed on the door which led to the gardens of the palazzo. Suddenly her cheek flushed and paled again. Ernest followed her glance—her lover, the young Antonio, had entered the saloon.

"The opportunity is at hand—see you miss it not; 'twill secure the girl: Antonio gone, you will possess the love she now gives to him," whispered the gentleman with the black rappee and scented Scotch.

The Marchese rose from the couch on which he had been reclining, and advanced towards Antonio with the air of a man who has some unpleasant duty to perform, somewhat to enact of which he would willingly rid himself, yet knows not how. There was a moment's pause, and then he spoke.

"Antonio, you are well aware that I have long des-

tined my daughter to become your bride—I have been compelled, however unwillingly, to rescind that determination; I have given her to Count Aldini. You are agitated. I do not expect you to bear so great and so sudden a privation unmoved; but at least exhibit that degree of command over your feelings which belongs to man. Here is no other alternative—look upon her already as his bride, for to-morrow makes her such”—Ernest felt his cheeks glow with rapture—“this I have promised; he, in return, resigns a mighty power over me which *chance*”—he shuddered at the recollection, Ernest did the same at the same thing—“had bestowed upon him.”

“Now, now,” murmured the painter’s elbow-councillor, “bid him drink with you.” Ernest rose.

“Signor Antonio,” he said, “I cannot disguise from myself that you rather than I would have been the choice of the Signora Aloysia; still I cannot consent to resign her and thus compromise my own happiness; but, when once united to the lady of my love, I will spare nothing to make thee amends. Let us, in token of our amity, drink from each other’s goblets!” The fatal draught he had already mingled with the sparkling wine—and now his intended victim, coldly bowing, received it from his hand.

“Capital! capital!” muttered his invisible monitor,

and Ernest heard him tap the lid of his snuff-box with evident glee.

“Drink, drink to your rival,” cried the Marchese. “’Tis vain to murmur, Antonio, the decree is gone forth, and we have nought to do but to submit. Yet oh ! remember, Antonio, ’twas necessity, not choice, which bade me act as I have done. Were I to wed my child to thee, poverty would be her portion—dishonour, mine.”

“Marchese,” gasped Antonio, “you have conquered. From earliest youth you have been my friend—my patron—and I will not now deceive you ; Aloysia and myself had planned to elope this night together. Take this confession as it is meant ; I now abandon the design ; I crave your pardon for once entertaining it ; it was a suggestion, surely, from the Evil One.” Ernest shuddered, and mentally agreed with him. “No, Marchese, I would not purchase my soul’s idol at the price of her father’s dishonour.”

“Antonio,” said Aloysia, firmly, “you have acted well, but I am as incapable of deceit as yourself, and when I gave my consent to become the Count Aldini’s bride, I confessed and abandoned our hasty project.”

“The moment of triumph approaches,” whispered the old gentleman. “I need not stay any longer, I can see, so good-by—and when the warm and passionate kisses of your beautiful bride excite your soul to rapture, remember with gratitude the donor of the pencil.” A

slight rustling noise reached the ear of Ernest, and then he felt as though a weight was removed from his brain and from his heart, and the scene enacting before him engrossed his mind.

“How nobly have these people acted!” he mentally muttered—“how paltry a part have I played! and see—see—the old Marchese has grasped the hand of Antonio; and now he blesses him, while Aloysia mutely stands prepared to sacrifice herself to save her parent! And is it I—Ernest Hartmann—is it I, indeed, who am the cause of all this misery? Am I a demon? Does this pencil render those who possess it fiends? Ha! there is murder doing—he takes the poisoned cup—he bows around—he raises it to his lips—one moment and I am lost, or, perhaps saved! Ha! is it too late? hold! drink not! you must not drink!” he shouted. He rushed forward—he sought to snatch the goblet from the hands of Antonio; and then, exhausted with the mental struggle, half sank upon a couch. All was astonishment!

“How, Signor?” sternly inquired the Marchese; “what does this strange conduct mean? What, I charge thee tell me, what is in the cup?”

“Have we assassins here?” cried Antonio.

“Assassins!” said Ernest, as he rose feebly, and remembered the necessity of warding off suspicion. “No, no—’twas but a sudden phantasy that oppressed me.”

“A weak subterfuge! Now I remember me, this is thy cup; prove thy innocence, which now we question, by drinking its contents thyself;” and, as he spoke, Antonio tendered the goblet.

“So, so,” muttered the old gentleman, “you have made a clever piece of business of this during my momentary absence. You must now drink yourself to escape suspicion, nay, even to avoid an ignominious death. Drink, man, drink; the pencil will save you from the effects of the poison.”

Ernest looked wildly around—none were present save the Marchese, who eyed him with a look of mingled astonishment and horror; Antonio, who stood before him like an avenging spirit; and Aloysia, who, covering her face with her hands, sought to shut out the strange and eventful scene.

“Drink, drink, drink,” whispered his ancient friend.

Ernest took the goblet from the hands of Antonio with that sort of calmness which the presence of very violent emotion will sometimes induce; raising it, he exclaimed, “Health to my beauteous bride!” and then drained it to the dregs.

“Pardon me, Count,” said the Marchese; “your present action obliterates all false suspicion.”

“I hope to rise yet further in your esteem,” cried Ernest, and he rushed from the saloon. The artist hurried home, sought his studio, fastened the door, and

abandoned himself to reflection. Ernest Hartmann was a very different being from the Count Aldini, who had left that apartment some few hours before.

In his agitation, Ernest had not noticed an individual who sat at the extreme end of the studio; but that person, having allowed him a few minutes to compose himself, now addressed him, and the words were delivered in the well-known tones of the old gentleman.

“Well, Signor, you perceive the correctness of my anticipations. I told you that nothing but Antonio’s drinking the contents of that phial could accomplish your purpose.”

Ernest had started with horror at the voice, and now gazed, with ill-concealed detestation, upon the person of the old gentleman.

“That purpose,” he replied in a hollow tone, “is abandoned.”

“Indeed! I presumed so. How liked ye the wine”—with a sneer—“prepared for your rival?”

“Was it not poison?”

“It was.”

“Cannot you counteract the effect of the draught, or must I die?”

“The pencil will assist you,” said the old gentleman; and then he took a pinch of snuff, and, taking the instrument from the willing hands of Ernest, he once more unscrewed it, and from the tube within produced

a phial similar in all respects to that which he had already shown him. "It is not yet too late to retrieve your folly ; here is a similar draught—administer it to some other individual—Antonio, or whom else ye please—and the act of his drinking will release you from the penalty you thus entail upon another."

"Never!"

The old gentleman laughed. "Choose ye then to die?"

"Can nothing save me?"

"Nothing but what I have said. Deliberate and resolve wisely : the poison will not effect its work for a week to come. During that period, torments will distract you—agues will shake your limbs—cramps will contract, with fearful agony, your sinews ; your spring of life will be dried up, and when the sun of the seventh day ceases to brighten the western sky, you will sink, a being fearful to look at, into a state of everlasting torment."

Ernest groaned.

The old gentleman laughed, and then resumed :—"Should you change your present determination and prefer pleasure to pain, ease to torment, health to sickness, life to death, only express your willingness to consign another to similar suffering ; and, whether you mutter it to the gloom of midnight, or to the sunshine

of noon—whether you tell it to the roar of ocean, or to the winds of heaven—I shall hear you.”

Ernest shuddered. “I will not buy my life at so fearful a price.”

“Why not, what have you to lose? You possess a gift from me—nay, everything you possess is a gift from me—and while you accept my bounty”—the old gentleman laughed—“you are bound to me.”

Ernest half screamed with horror; the gentleman with the white and venerable-looking locks took another pinch of black rappee and scented Scotch.

“Monster! you deceive me!”

“Time will show,” said his ancient friend. “Farewell, and ponder on my words.” He bowed courteously and departed.

“Idiot that I was,” exclaimed the wretched artist, “to accept a gift from such a personage! Now do I pay a penalty severe indeed!” He turned a look of frantic horror on the fatal pencil. “Thou cause of all my misery,” he said, “would to Heaven I had never beheld thee! but now that wish is worse than useless; that prayer must be prayed in vain. All now left me is to meet my terrible fate with manly fortitude.”

Embosomed amid one of those extensive and picturesque ranges of mountains which furnish forth such wild and romantic legends to the inhabitants of Ger-

many, stood the small but beautiful village of Braunfels. No imperious chieftain, envious of the happiness which he could not, with all his dear-bought luxuries, obtain, oppressed the honest tiller of the soil; but, defended by a good, yet powerful master, the villagers lived on increasing every year in rustic wealth and prosperity.

From the high road, a narrow and somewhat intricate path leads to the hamlet just mentioned, and along this devious bridle-way, about a week after the past occurrence, rode a solitary traveller, pale with fatigue and illness, meanly clad and sorrily mounted. It was the painter, Ernest, who, with his bright hopes marred, his gay anticipations cooled to despair, his prosperity gone, his very life precarious—hurried back to his native village, there to expiate with death his errors.

The sun was sinking rapidly and in all his gorgeous magnificence—Ernest gazed toward the departing luminary. “Another hour, and what shall I have become. Well, well, as far as human power admits, I have atoned for my errors. By this time, Antonio—instead of filling a loathsome grave—is happy with the object of his love; Aloysia is blest, and her parent joyful. They think me dead—my hated treasure is theirs, and, though ill gained by me, will surely lose its venom in virtuous hands. See, the sun sinks apace; already his beams but gild the mountain’s top; the mists gather fast in the valleys; the bark of the watch-dog announces the returning

flocks, and the casement of each cottage in the hamlet below me is lit by the cheerful evening fire within !” He was on a shelving path, which projected from a steep cliff; on his right was an unfathomable abyss, whence, from some great depth below, the sound of subterranean waters would occasionally catch the ear of the astounded traveller. Suddenly he stopped, put his hand within his girdle, and drew forth the pencil. “What prevents me,” he gloomily cried, “from dashing this fatal gift far from me? I promised, indeed, neither to sell nor to give it away, but now I cast it from me, and to the world beneath me throw the accursed charm!” He hurled it from him, and down it went to an incalculable depth.

The spirits of Ernest rose; his very horse seemed lightened of his burden, and, trotting on, the distance to Braunfels rapidly diminished.

After passing this dangerous path, the road to the village was but brief; the first house was one devoted to entertainment, and, at that time, mine host of the Golden Eagle was alike celebrated for the goodness of his wine, and the devoted affection with which he himself regarded it. Some little distance beyond stood the ancient church dedicated to our Lady of Braunfels, which moreover contained the maiden effort of our unfortunate painter.

Ernest, to whom the surrounding scenery was well

known, hurried on, but, as he passed the Golden Eagle, the well-remembered voice of the jolly landlord arrested his progress.

“Pause ye, sir, pause ye.”

Ernest reined in his horse, and turned somewhat impatiently. “Now, now, what would ye?”

“Marry, just this much (hiccup): few pass this house without tasting the wine (hiccup); but never heed that (hiccup); is your name Ernest?”

“Ernest! Ha! it is.”

“Then I have this to give you,” producing a small packet. Ernest tore away the outer covering, and, lo! the pencil presented itself. He shuddered.

“Where got ye this?” he inquired.

“Marry why thou knowest best; thy friend, an old gentleman, left it here some five minutes back, and told me to tell thee something (hiccup), but I forgot what, about not escaping him. I’m waxing old and forgetful (hiccup); *he* drank some wine, and commended it mightily, and told me to drink plentifully, and so I will (hiccup).” The toper staggered away, and Ernest rode on. “Yes,” he said, “’tis plain the foul fiend has a firm hold of me, and will not easily resign his victim.” He looked upwards: the sun had set. “My very minutes are numbered—ah! here is the church where so oft I have prayed for wealth and eminence; well have my prayers been granted. I will at least terminate my

career in a hallowed fane—at least give my last thoughts to Heaven.” He dismounted with difficulty—his limbs already seemed stiffening—he unclosed the door and entered; yet, ere he did so, once more with loathing and disgust he hurled from him the pencil.

All within was silent, all dark, save where a solitary lamp burned by the altar. He paced slowly and with pain up the aisle, and knelt with lowliness, not only of body but of mind, before the high altar. There was his own identical painting, representing, in glowing colours, St. Michael destroying the Serpent of Evil; and, as he gazed upon it, thoughts of the days of happy boyhood thrilled his heart, and carried with them anguish and despair. Then did the words of prayer spring from his whitening lips—the tear of penitence from his dim and closing eye. Anon, his mind became confused; visions of horror distracted him; frightful cries rang in his ears; and every sense seemed teeming with that which to it was most abhorrent. Then did he fancy, in an interval of his tortures, that the head of the serpent in the picture before him resembled that of the old gentleman—his features distorted with disappointed malice. Then again came agony, then darkness, and then insensibility.

Gaily shone the summer sun which lit the young and beauteous Elsi to that church on the ensuing morning.

She went to pray for the speedy return of her long-absent, long-lost lover—and, lo ! there he lay, apparently dead, on the steps of the altar ! Elsi screamed with surprise and dread—and that shriek seemed to arouse him, for the colour revisited his pallid cheek—his eyelids unclosed, and he gazed around in listless languor. The sight of Elsi excited his dormant mind—he sprang up, and she rushed into his arms.

“Dearest Ernest, how I have longed for your return !”

“Is this fact, Elsi ?”

“Can you doubt it ?” reproachfully.

“But Johann—he—he loved you.”

“No, no, ’twas my sister ; he is married to her. O, Ernest, how glad am I to see you again ! My father has given his consent to our union, and your uncle, the miser, who lived amid the hills, is dead, and has left his flocks to you. But say, Ernest, are you ill ? or, perhaps,”—and the tears started—“perhaps some other maiden has won your heart.”

“No, no, my Elsi ; ’tis you, and you only, I love. But come, I have had some dangerous adventures ; let us thank protecting powers for my present safety and happiness.” And so together they knelt before the high altar of our Lady of Braunfels.

What a pity it is that there are so many in the world who, unlike Ernest Hartmann, receive the greatest

possible benefits, without any return of gratitude or even of thanks !

The pencil was never again seen by our painter—but, whenever the rich and happy farmer, Ernest, heard of any one rising to eminence, whose intrinsic merits and talents did not justify such exaltation, he would ominously shake his head and mutter to himself, “Heaven help him ! he has got the Old Gentleman’s Pencil !”

STANZAS.

BY LORD MORPETH.

Who has not felt, 'mid azure skies,
At glowing noon, or golden even,
A soft and mellow sadness rise,
And tinge with earth the hues of heaven?

That shadowing consciousness will steal
O'er every scene of fond desire,
Linger in laughter's gayest peal,
And close each cadence of the lyre.

In the most radiant landscape's round,
Lurk the dim haunts of crime and care;
Man's toil must plough the teeming ground,
His sigh must load the perfumed air.

O for the suns that never part,
The fields with hues unfading dress'd,
Th' unfaltering strain, th' unclouded heart,
The joy, the triumph, and the rest!







THE ROMAN SISTERS.

A FRAGMENT.

Marcia. Rule him, my Tullia ! And is it thus that you, a Roman maiden, speak of a Roman spouse ; one of the world's masters, and so soon to be your own ? Nay, Tullia, as you value your peace of mind, and a fair name among your sisters—pause !

Tullia. But Marcia, why this caution ? Does not all Rome declare that woman has ever been the chief stay of our house ? Through all the Marian and Catilinian struggles, when death hung doubtful over either party, watching each scale of empire's trembling balance—now rising and again depressed—when to be neutral was more dangerous than daring, on either hand—who led our father through those troublesome times, guarding alike his honour and his safety ? Rome says it was our mother !

Marcia. She *advised*, my Tullia ; such is woman's duty, perhaps her noblest function.

Tullia. Then say, dear protestant, when the last

agonies of expiring liberty shook to its centre this imperial city, when Pompey led our noblest and our best——

Marcia. Tullia, forbear! Cæsar has cunning ears and eyes more numerous than Argus. A pretty ruler thou, to govern man! Valour, without discretion, the gods call rashness; bitterly they punish it!

Tullia. Alas, I had forgot that we were slaves!

Marcia. Again, unhappy child!

Tullia. Nay, sister, chide me not! Now, with the bridal wreath upon my brow, I claim some little license, and cannot quite forget we were patricians, when patrician was a name of power—a shadow now! Chide not, and I will modify my speech. When Pompey led the noble and the good forth from our gates, to fructify with their rich blood the barbarous soils of Spain and Africa,—when Antony and Lepidus gambled for human hearts, and widows' tears,—when Cicero fell, and ties of birth or friendship were as mere threads of flax, touched by the flame of human passions,—who ruled thy husband through the desperate storm, and saved us all that now remains to us—our honour and some wealth, with that which both have brought *me*—this bridal wreath? My stern and dark-browed sister, Rome says that it was thou! Has Jove then given to *thee* a rescript for thy rule and thine alone, of all thy sex? May I not share

thy right when I shall emulate thy state, my matron sister?

Marcia. Rule I did not, dear Tullia! I may have won and cautioned. Hear me speak.

Of all the rocks on which the happiness of our frail sex is lost so often, there is none more dangerous than the love of power. Woman adores the strong, and man the tender. So thou wouldst *rule* Sempronius! Thinkest thou, had Hercules designed thee for such lofty office, he had endowed thee with these delicate limbs, that gentle downcast eye, which shrinks even from my gaze? Thinkest thou to guide Bucephalus, when snorting to the trumpet's brazen voice, with such a silken band as binds a husband's image to the bosom of his wife? Yes; gaze upon those lineaments, my Tullia. Fifteen long years have they—the shadow of my lord, stamped in the metal by the chemist's art—held bound thy “stern and dark-browed sister.” Deemest thou the substance of that shadow, whose nervous arm cleft at one blow the giant Gaul in twain, through thick-bossed shield, and triple-woven turban, thinkest thou that he would yield him to the guidance of that light fragile rein which sways my woman heart? No, no, sweet Tullia! Look on that noble galley! How peacefully it rides the quiet bay. Now, were thy future lord commander there, and thou the partner of his summer voyage, how cheerful would it be, sometimes, in playfulness, to seize

the helm! How would he smile to see thy tender hand, guiding, as with a thread, the motions of the monster! Love, once, in childish frolic, seized Jove's thunderbolt. Thou hast heard the tale. True, the boy burned his fingers, but the dread father smiled. How would the realms have shaken with his wrath, had Juno rashly raised the awful weapon! Tullia, thou art a *wife* betrothed, and not a child—beware!

Tullia. But Marcia, even you admit that it is sport sometimes to seize the helm that guides the richly-laden galley of domestic bliss.

Marcia. In calm, and on the sunny bay of home, it is; but oh, my sister, think of the whirling terrors of Charybdis; the ceaseless turmoil of the engulfing world;—think of fierce Scylla and her thousand dogs, the herd of hell-born envy. When riding on the narrow strait of life—death upon either hand, and raving waves contending for the mastery—say, wouldst thou dare the helm? Would not the pilot, in pure charity, uplift thy slender form, and hurl thee thence, bleeding and weeping on the slippery deck? Tullia, I warn thee; man is like yonder mountain. Upon its surface bloom bowers that outrival Arcady, while in its heart, the eternal fires burn without ceasing. The warmer glow the pent and struggling flames, the brighter on its bosom breaks the early spring—richer upon the boughs the latter fruits. But for that heat, it were a

dazzling wilderness of snow. Oh, 'tis a proud but fearful thing, my sister, standing upon the verge of the vast crater, to look down upon the heaving throes of the dark lake that warms yon paradise. But when the eruption comes, let mortal foot retreat. It is bootless to oppose, standing upon the trembling earth, the scathing lava-stream, although it wreck the fond hope of the year: let it have vent, and we may live upon the joys its vengeance spares; oppose it, and we die! So, when the true wife nestles to the breast of him whom she has chosen, trembling, but proud, she looks into the eyes which are the craters of his ardent soul. The fiercer glow, within, the fires of feeling, the brighter bloom for her the joys of wedded life. But when the storm of passion bursts its bonds, and the red lava brims from its deep font, then will she stand aside. Ay, though it furrow deep the soil of her affections with traces that no time can remedy, she stands aside, and sighing, says, "Let me rejoice in what the gods have left!"

Then Tullia, here, at the foot of Ceres' statue, from whose full horn may joys be ever scattered round thee, here let me beg, with all the fervour of a sister's love, that thou wilt thrust aside this dangerous thought, this dream of unfledged childhood. Win, guide, advise, persuade, girl, as thou pleasest; for this your graces and your virtues fit you, but as you value your own happiness, speak not, oh never speak of ruling!

THE TWO BLIND BEGGARS OF SEGOVIA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "RATTLIN THE REEFER," "THE OLD
COMMODORE," ETC.

I HONOUR the Spanish character, at least, that little that remains of it, as it has been handed down to us, upon the most glorious and heroic pages of history that ever chronicled the deeds of any nation. What little remains of it! The train of mortifying reflections to which that short sentence gives rise!

Again, I assert that I honour the Spanish character, though sometimes pride will make a Spaniard carry his head so high that he is not aware that his heels are in the mire, and that, whilst his thoughts have lifted his individuality above the clouds, his path through life is actually a dirty one. Now, we do not admire him for the meannesses and subterfuges with which, for the want of a better aliment, he is too often obliged to feed his ostentation; but for the high-souled principle itself—the pure steel of the Iberian heart—there is rust upon

it; we are sorry for it; but it is not that rust which we would wish to panegyrisé.

Don Alphonso Mantamieja Mintinez de la Boza, (we have only given a tithe of the gentleman's names,) was a thorough-bred Spanish Hidalgo. Indeed, he could so far trace up his remote ancestry, that it was evident, at least to himself, that he was of the pure Vandal blood; and, consequently, infinitely superior to any one who could only trace up the antiquity of his family to the occupation of his country by those mere upstarts, the Romans. Here was something to be proud of, Heaven knows! we were about to say—but perhaps there may be a little difficulty in ascertaining the opinions prevalent in that elevated quarter. A Spaniard makes no doubt of it. Boza was proud. None of his ancestors had ever been known to have ridden upon an ass. Boza could not have lost caste in this matter, for he was not worth the value of one of those worthy and patient animals.

Minuteness of description seems to be the leading literary fashion; but, alas! I cannot follow it in this case. My records are but meagre on the subject of the personal appearance of this redoubtable Don, and I have but very little imagination to draw upon; but were my invention but equal to the credulity of the public, he should be described with an accuracy and a

detail that should make the critics lift up their inky hands and exclaim, "Eureka! but here is fine writing!"

This little, however, has been handed to us concerning him. Notwithstanding his Teutonic descent, he was more swarthy than an Egyptian, indeed, though his features were European after the ugliest model, and Europe is not unbountiful in ugliness, his complexion was nearly Nubian. He was very little, and very thin, and his habit from his infancy, of throwing his chin at his eyes, and his eyes upwards, in order to overlook every one that he could, he had curved his small and attenuated frame forwards, so that viewed sideways, he looked like the segment of an iron hoop.

But this Hidalgo had, "like Jephthah the judge of Israel, but one daughter, and she *was* surpassing fair." She was a blonde of the purest and most transparent character, with light, resplendent hair, that seemed to have borrowed its colour from the edge of some fleecy cloud just touched by the moonlight. The young Segovians had compared it to all manner of incomparable things, and the sub-prior of the oldest monastery in the city, had offered her father one hundred dollars for the whole crop, in order to place it on the scalp of his painted image of the Virgin Mother. At the time my true tale commences, this negotiation was going on.

There would be but little use in saying anything about her eyes, for eyes, and ladies' eyes especially,

have caused the expenditure of more Ohs! Ahs! and exclamations of rapture, than any other diminutive article existing. Let it be sufficient to bear it in mind, that they were large, deeply blue, fringed and crowned by dark eyelashes and eyebrows, which we really know not to have been either stained or dyed, notwithstanding the malicious report, that no doubt had arisen from the raven-locked and carrotty-polled, and which was somewhat countenanced by the splendid fairness of the Donzella's hair. Those eyes were dangerous to remember, and it was almost madness to gaze upon them. However, there was not a young cavalier in Segovia who was not rash enough to wish to run the risk, and yet there was not one who could honestly boast that he had bathed his soul in those liquid fountains of bliss; which, in common sense means, that he had looked fairly into them.

Now this young lady's name was Jasmina, and some of the best sonnets and madrigals that Segovia had produced—a city by no means, until then, famous for its poetry—were strongly tinctured with the flavour of the jasmine. The city, at that time, boasted of three wonders; the first was, how Don Alphonso Mantamieja Mintinez de la Boza and his daughter Jasmina contrived to support themselves, for they were never known, for years, to have possessed a maravedis; secondly, how anything so beautiful as was the said daughter, could

live and breathe ; and lastly, which was the greatest of all the wonders, how she happened to be the daughter of her father at all. We need say nothing about the number of Jasmina's lovers. All who had seen her were in a state of distraction, and all those who had not, were nearly as much distracted to get a sight of her. The usual topic discussed, after the first salutation, was "the Jasmina."

Now, serenades are good things in themselves, with a few trifling exceptions ; but as, of all other good things, there may be too much of them ; and, decidedly, we think, that they should be served up one at a time. But, in the street in which Jasmina resided, from the setting of the sun until its rising, nothing was to be heard but "jar, jar, jah, twang, twang, twang," so that sleep was impossible, without taking many disagreeable precautions. Cotton had risen in that quarter of the town full fifty per cent. As guitars, even Spanish ones, will sometimes get out of tune, and a man may be very deeply in love and still have a discordant voice, the annoyance of the rival serenaders, became, at length, so intolerable, that a municipal guard was placed at either end of the street, to break the empty heads and the instruments of all those who felt inclined to break their hearts and the public peace in honour of the Jasmina. If all these be not indications of the surpass-

ing beauty of this paragon, we know not where to look for them.

The street in which this respectable father and beautiful daughter resided, was the oldest, the gloomiest, and the most exclusively aristocratic of all the thoroughfares of which Segovia could boast. Its buildings were lofty, ancient, and, for the most part, dilapidated. There, during the whole day, pride and poverty reigned in dignified silence; and, as the shades of night darkened upon the narrow avenue, its hungry and solemn inmates would steal from the door to make those sordid shifts to procure sustenance for the morrow, shifts to which nothing but a union of penury and vanity would consent. Of this class we have before hinted, that Don Mintinez de la Boza was the proudest; and, alas! for the sake of his beautiful daughter, the poorest also.

As we have said so much of this singular pair, it is high time that they should say something for themselves. They are seated at their frugal board. Oh! how frugal. It was nearly seven in the evening, and this was, at least for the Don, his first meal. He glared over it, the personation of famine. It fared much better with his daughter, that is to say, she fared tolerably well. As she passed to and fro daily, either to church or on any little message, or for her walk in the evening, her kind neighbours would snatch her into their houses, and feed her, as loveliness should be fed, upon the

daintiest. They did not suspect—they *knew* the state of the Don's housekeeping. The Don himself would much sooner have passed his long Toledo rapier through his body, than have defiled his nobility, by sitting down to feed with rich shopkeepers and burly-looking tradesmen. So he starved on proudly.

Now, such are the inconsistencies of human nature, and so strange are the subterfuges to which that meanest of all feelings pride, must have recourse, that, for the last year, he had actually supported himself and his old duenna upon the bounty of two blind beggars. He, who could do this, would have run through the body, or have hired an assassin to do it, by selling the last remnant of his property, any person who might offer him an alms, or have presumed to have presented him with the fragments of his table.

The father and daughter were seated in the dreary, though lofty, chamber, whilst the old woman, muttering alternately, inaccurate prayers and curses more complete, moved in hunger and ill-humour about them. The board contained only a few dry crusts of bread, that none but the Don knew how procured, a little rancid oil, a little dirty vinegar, some heads of stale garlic, and certain leaves of vegetables, it is to be hoped more wholesome than they were palatable, which the Hidalgo had gathered in the open fields, and from under banks and hedges, in his excursions on the

previous evening. This was to make their salad, an office that the Don immediately took upon himself, and which he performed with many a piteous look towards Jasmina, and a great deal of heartbreaking writhings in his dark and shrivelled cheeks. They had to wait for their more substantial parts of the repast.

“The salad is ready, dear Jasmina, and it is past the time at which the saints generally think of their poor worshippers. In very fact, my child, your old father is as much hungered as any hardworking plebeian.”

“Then why not, my dear sir, step into Señor Stombino’s about noon. The rich goldsmith would be most happy to have at his table a guest that he tells me he so much honours. There is Señor Richodeleñor.”

“Stop, dear Jasmina ; you know not what impossibilities you are uttering. You, my beloved child, upon whom the supporting of the dignity of our unblemished race has not yet devolved, for you are still a mere infant, may, without degradation, partake of such low hospitality ; but I—dry up those tears ; but I—weep not so, my last, my only comfort—but I, who, as yet have not broken my fast—would much sooner—But I distress you terribly. Have the saints forgotten me to-day ?”

“I think the blind beggars—may a million years of purgatory be their portion!—are coming down the street, for already I hear their profane song. May the vermin come full-handed.”

This charitable speech was from the mouth of the old lady in waiting ; but it must be forgiven her, as she had, like her master, been waiting the whole day in order to break her fast.

“ Fie upon you, Grumpzelda,” said the old Don, with dignity. “ The blind beggars have nothing to do with it ; or, if they have, they are the mere instruments of the saints. Do you think it was the deed of the ravens only, when the prophet was fed in the desert ? How often must I repeat to you, ignorant old person that you are, that this daily supply of heterogeneous food, is a miracle worked in favour of my house that endowed so largely this church and monastery from whence those instruments issue. Did *I* ever speak to these blind beggars ; and who directs the steps of the blind, always to the same house, and to the same portico of the same house ? Saint Ignatius, truly—beast that you are not to comprehend that ! Let me hear of no more of these accursed blind beggars. If you must speak about this miracle—and I would give—ah ! wo is me—I have now nothing to give ; but if you must speak about this miracle,—and who can bridle an old woman’s tongue ?—let, I say, all the merit of it be given to the saint, and nothing whatever be mentioned of these wretched mendicants—hark—there is the bell ; go down, Grumpzelda, and see what the church has, this day, provided for me.”

The old woman descended, all the while saying to herself, that which was not prudent for her master to overhear.

The Don turned to his daughter, and said to her with a melancholy bitterness, "This miserable saint—may he and them—holy Virgin, forgive me the impiety! This glorious saint, and his priests, and his monks, have had enough of me and of mine. Nearly the whole of our patrimony has been made over to them, and the small portion that was left to me they are now striving for in the courts of law. Surely this saint owes me something. Had we but a tenth of that which goes to keep up the pomp and state of his monastery; all of which has been derived from us, we should still be able to hold up our heads among the loftiest nobles of the land."

"My poor father!"

"Ay, my daughter, very poor indeed! but not the less noble! If I thought that I had been subsisting upon the bounty—you understand me—the mere self-dictated bounty of these detestable beggars, my hitherto pure blood would curdle into loathsomeness in my veins—my heart should break suddenly and I should die."

"God, in his infinite mercy, forbid!"

"Say, my only consoler, say that you believe in this agency; call it a miracle, my love, call it a miracle!"

At first, Jasmina could only reply by weeping pas-

sionately ; at length, flinging herself into his arms, she sobbed out, "I believe you to be the best of fathers, the most honourable of men."

"I knew you did, and therefore hold me incapable even of thinking a lie. Let me wipe away the tears with this beautiful hair. There, you smile again ; you even seem comparatively happy."

"To be sure, father : will not the sub-prior of St. Ignatius send us, this evening, one hundred dollars, for this useless superfluity," said she, twisting her beautiful locks playfully.

"It is dishonourable, disgraceful, and unworthy of our name and lineage. I will not conclude the bargain."

"But you are so thin, O my father, so painfully thin. And your cloak, what can either I or Grumpzelda do more for that threadbare cloak ? I shiver when I think of it ; winter is approaching."

"Every word you speak is a dagger. But you are well clad—well provided. Thank God ! thank God ! that lustrous hair shall not be sacrificed."

"But it will grow so soon again ; and I have prepared the prettiest little cap imaginable."

"But the daughter's hair to be sold for the support of an Hidalgo. What a father ! what a noble ! It cannot be."

"But you forget, my honoured sire, for what glorious purpose these all unworthy tresses are destined. Is not

the deed consecrated? Let no longer these scruples torment you."

"There is something, there is much in that. The act is a holy act: it is a deed of good works. Her hair will float in glory down the shoulders of the Blessed Mother," said the now half-reconciled father.

"My father will be fed and clad," was the only thought of the daughter.

By this time, the contents of the beggars' basket had been duly selected and arranged on the table. If the excellency of a feast consisted in its variety, that evening's repast was splendid. The saint had not been niggardly that day. The abstemious Spaniard, and the old duenna fared sumptuously. The water with which it was concluded was pure and cool. What Spaniard, when he dines at his own expense, wishes for more?

As we do not intend to attempt to captivate, by the means of surprise, we shall inform the reader that there was but little of the miraculous in the conduct of the two blind beggars. Before the harpies of the church had hounded on the harpies of the law, upon the remnant of the Don's estate, which was now sequestered, to await the issue of the litigation, he lived upon a tolerable competence, and Jasmina, at that time, whenever she went to her devotions, always remembered that charity was a part of religion, and the two blind beggars had, for that charity, exchanged with her many bless-

ings. The acuteness of their ears fully compensated for the opacity of their eyes, and they knew as much about the poverty and the pride of her father, as he did himself, and a great deal more. They had, by long custom, become a sort of appendages to the church of Saint Ignatius, and even their too great proximity to the confessionals, was rarely noticed. They knew more secrets than any other two persons in Segovia. Their coin they kept; but as they received much broken victuals, so after selecting (as was due to the merits of two persons so distinguished) the daintiest morsels for themselves, on their return home after the labours (I mean the pleasures of the day, for it *is* a pleasure to be all day long receiving), they deposited what remained of the food in the hands of Grumpzelda.

With a heart more light, and a brow more serene than usual, Don de la Boza sate in placid tranquillity, waiting for some person from the Monastery, to conclude the bargain respecting his daughter's hair. The apartment was arranged, and the old and worm-eaten furniture did not look amiss in the gathering gloom of the advancing evening. The duenna had commenced one of her most improbable romances, to which Jasmina was either listening devoutly, or over which she was slumbering, for she sate motionless, with her intensely blue eyes completely veiled by her dark eyelashes.

We must say a few words concerning this sub-prior

of the Monastery of Ignatius. He was a man still in the prime of life, ambitious, eager for wealth, and had completely identified himself with the splendour and glory of the establishment to which he belonged. To those who know what Spain was, and even now is, we need say nothing of the rivalry of the different orders of friars, even in the puerilities of dramatic processions, and in the meretricious decorations of the images of their saints. Those to whom Spanish superstition is a stranger, would not credit a description of these religious absurdities. The Sub-prior, Anselmo, had entered into the full spirit of this rivalry, and, believing jesuitically, that the end would sanctify the means, he had been but little scrupulous as to the morality of his measures by which he sought to enrich his priory, or make it surpassing in splendour.

At the appointed time, he made his appearance, accompanied by his almoner, and a celebrated barber. Even after all that Jasmina had said, the proud old Don was almost bent to the earth, by a sense of humiliation. Anselmo was courteous and easy in his manners. He blessed them all in an harmonious and full-toned voice, commended the calm resignation of Jasmina, and then told the barber to proceed with his operation. But De la Boza had had too many dealings with the church, and particularly with that portion of the church over which the Prior presided, to conclude a bargain with

any member of it, in an over-hasty manner, so he submissively said, "Holy Father, knowing our necessities, and who *can* know them so well as yourself? had we not better see the money counted down before we proceed to this—this disagreeable operation."

"Benedicite ! but thou sayest well, my son ! Brother Jerome settle this account with the Don. We contaminate not our fingers by touching the filthy lucre."

Hereupon the almoner placed a small deal box on the table, ribbed around with several thin strips of tin, which the unsuspecting Mintinez de la Boza conceived to contain the stipulated amount in dollars. He was never more mistaken in all his long life of mistakes.

"There is the key," said the almoner, shoving, with a pious gravity, the little box across the table. "And there is the account you have to pay our chapter, exactly thirteen dollars and five reals. We cannot give credit, for our order is poor and our coffers nearly empty. Verily, the calls of charity are great !"

"He says right, my son. Brother Jerome speaks wisely. My friend, proceed," continued the Sub-prior, turning to the barber, "whilst the Hidalgo goes to his scrutoire for the coin."

"May a million imps of hell seize him ! I'll spit the vagabond before your faces, if he but dare to touch one hair of her head," roared the Don, in an ungovernable

passion. "Jasmina, go to your chamber—stop not for salutation—away."

"My daughter," commenced the Prior, with a voice of great humility, but with a flushed countenance, "my daughter with the radiant hair,"—but the lady and the hair had vanished, so the Prior very wisely suspended his speech.

Not so the Don; he had been raving without ceasing. Indeed, for a good Catholic, he blasphemed most woefully. The Almoner trembled, and the Barber was fixed, like Lot's wife, a pale monument of consternation, with his hands uplifted, and the sacrificial scissors lying at his feet. He had some cause, for the little curved Don had drawn his rapier, which was nearly as long as himself, and had placed it in painful contiguity to the tonsor's breast.

"Thou shalt do no murder," said the Prior, with an elevated voice.

"That he shan't!" said the old housekeeper, throwing her haggard arms around his weasel-like body, and dragging him backwards, whilst, as he retreated, he kept frantically thrusting at vacancy.

"Cormorants that ye are—leeches that suck away the life from all that are noble and good! When will you be satisfied? Have you not robbed me of my patrimony—have you not made a wealthy and an ancient house desolate—have you not given me famine

for my bosom companion—you would take all, even to the very hair from our heads. Is this just? Is this righteous? Well—well—but you might have spared a very feeble old man this insult. What do I want with your miserable relics—am I a dealer in such rubbish?”

“He blasphemes!” exclaimed the two monks simultaneously. The Barber, forgetting the awful presence in which he stood, sank down on the nearest chair in a paroxysm of horror, and Grumpzelda let go her hold upon her master in her fright. The Prior, the Almoner, and the Barber, seeing the infuriated Don once more at liberty, with his naked sword in his hand, very prudently took the opportunity of departing—not certainly in silence, for there was much said about the holy office, and a great deal threatened, in which the word “familiar” sounded fearfully awful. The Almoner took care, however, to carry off the little deal box, though he left the account upon the table, with which he had brought in the Don so cleverly his debtor.

In order to relieve the anxiety of the curious, we must inform them, that this said box contained a little dirty and matted hair, of a carrotty tint, as well as its nastiness would permit it to be seen; a tolerably large piece of charcoal, a piece of old spongy wood, and a phial filled with water, of a most unwholesome greenish hue. The bill left on the table will explain the value

of this apparently valueless stuff. It ran nearly as follows :—

“The Monastery of Ignatius creditor, to Don Alphonso Montamieja Mintinez de la Boza, one hundred dollars, for the whole of the hair of the head of his daughter Jasmina, which hair is to be dedicated to the service of the Blessed Virgin.

“On the other hand, the said Don Alphonso Montamieja Mintinez de la Boza is indebted to the said monastery as follows :—

Dollars. Reals. Maravedis.

“One plain deal box, duly consecrated	4	16
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“A portion of the earth taken from the bottom of the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, duly authenticated by the patriarch residing there, and by the monks of the order of the Holy Sepulchre . . .	22	5	16
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“A part of a faggot nearly consumed, that contributed to form the fire into which St. Paul shook the viper, on the Island of Melita, gathered from the spot, and authenticated by three respectable Greeks .	20	5	0
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“A lock of the hair of the sister of the blessed St. Ignatius. This is

Dollars. Reals. Maravedis.

verified by all the officials of his
most holy foundation 20 5 0

“ A piece of the wreck of the
fishing boat in which the disciples
made their miraculous draught of
fishes. If applied with proper faith,
this relic is efficacious against the
tooth-ache 19 5 0

“ A phial containing a liquid of
unknown efficacy and virtue, sup-
posed, upon very good grounds, to
be the tears of the Magdalen. This
has been blessed by the Holy Father
at Rome 30 0 0

113 5 0

100 0 0

“ Balance due to the monastery . 13 5 0

With returning reason, De la Boza began to curse his temporary impetuosity; and sending for Jasmina, he detailed to her, in heart-broken accents, all the follies that he had committed, and all the fears that attended them. She soothed him to the best of her ability, and having prayed together, they retired to their separate chambers for the night.

The whole of the next day, the Don passed in trem-

bling expectancy of clerical vengeance in some shape. To his surprise, it came not, and the dole was brought by the blind beggars as usual. The wretched father ate but little, and went to his bed under a great deal of fever. On the second day after his affray with the priests, he appeared cheerful, yet mysterious, and hinted darkly to his daughter of a happier future. About five in the afternoon, he stole forth from his abode of penury, and repairing to the church of the convent, spent nearly an hour in enrapt devotion before the shrine of Saint Ignatius. He then arose with a firm step and a glistening eye, and scrutinizing narrowly all the parts of the church, he found no one in it but himself and the two blind beggars discoursing cheerily together near the principal door. De la Boza advanced silently towards them, and standing closely behind their backs, and breathing softly, he listened to everything that they said.

Tomazo, who was a merry little man about sixty, said to Pietro, "Well, brother, we have finished our day's work here : shall we rise and go our rounds?"

"Ay," replies Pietro, a much younger man, with a touch of the sentimental upon his thin sallow face. "I am impatient to share with my Seraphina the delights of wedded life."

"Is your Seraphina handsome?"

“As a young saintess; and my three children are beautiful as so many cherubs. Sweet home!”

“The sweet Posada for me! But what signifies it to us, Pietro, whether our wives be ugly or not?”

“Sacred sister of Saint Ignatius!” said Pietro, turning up his sightless eyeballs; “it signifies a great deal! I adore—I doat upon beauty. It is the feast of my soul—the sustenance of my heart. Hence my devotion to the transcendent Jasmina, the lovely daughter of that proud and silly old Don.”

Had not the fear of sacrilege restrained his hand, the proud and silly old Don, who had already unsheathed his rapier, would have passed it through the body of the blind devotee of beauty.

“I can’t understand this fanfarado. It is a long, a very long time since I saw; and then I was not one fiftieth so well off as I now am. If I were to recover my sight, I suppose that the police would make me go to work, which I horribly detest.”

“Ah, you were always an idle fellow!”

“No; but I am noble—blind beggar though I sit here.”

“Well: I am not fond of work myself: therefore I suppose that I am noble also. I like to ruminate; to speculate upon the charms of my wife and children, and the glories of the Donzella’s countenance and figure. Ah, Tomazina! Ah, Jasmina!”

“But you never saw either.”

“Yes, old man—with a hundred eyes! I, blind as I am, make those who see, see more. I make them speak of these beauties, and then they themselves observe more intently. But you understand me not. I will descend to your intellect, brother. What have you taken to-day?”

“Only two dollars and a half. But I complain not. I have thrived exceedingly. A blessing on my blindness? Exceedingly have I thrived.”

“And I also. My Seraphina lives the life of a countess. My two boys shall go to the University; and my lovely little prattler shall marry a nobleman, or I will disown her.”

“I commend your determination, brother. Gentlemen of our profession should evince a proper spirit. We are not to be despised. Humble and abject as the world may deem us, do we not keep from actual starving one of the noblest houses in old Castille? I don’t begrudge the refuse of our meals to the poverty-stricken piece of empty pride, Boza, with his long list of names.”

“The father is an ass doubtlessly; but it shall not be permitted, brother, that you revile him, for the sake of his adorable daughter. Could I but once touch her hand!”

At this rhapsody De la Boza’s sword actually waved

over the blind beggar's head. The Don's hate of his feeders had increased to ferocity.

"Pietro," said Tomazo, lowering his voice, "I am much troubled where to hide my treasure. If I were to place it in corners or holes, the unrighteous would watch me, and the saving of years would be plucked from me in an instant. I am my own bank."

"Your difficulty is mine precisely. I give my Seraphina, every morning, sufficient for the day; but—but—I am my own coffer—my own strong box."

"Ha, ha, ha! your reliance on your Seraphina is amusing. Hush!—listen! There are none present. Come behind this altar, and I will let you feel how I manage. Here are more than two thousand dollars in small pieces of gold. You perceive that they are quilted in this false crown of my hat. I don't feel the weight. No, no, no!" said the old beggar laughing, and at the same time poisoning the mass merrily in his right hand.

"Well, I cannot boast of so much. I have but little more than one thousand. A family like mine is expensive. I fasten my treasure in this long thin pouch that I belt round my waist. It is easily undone. My plan is, I think, better than yours. Your hat may be knocked off."

"True, true. Let me examine the fastenings. You need not let it go out of your hand." But he did however.

The Don had been stooping over them as he spoke. He snatched suddenly at, and possessed himself of both sums of money, and gliding softly from out the church, he made the best of his way home.

“Villain! my money!” “Heretic of hell! my treasure!” exclaimed each of the beggars simultaneously; then flying at each other’s throats, they grappled together, both afraid of letting go their hold. In this firm embrace, they tottered instinctively the few paces between them and the church door, and then, rolling together down the stone steps, they were received with a resounding splash into a pool of mud and water at the bottom. This immersion had the effect of separating them for a moment; but no sooner had they got upon their feet, than, one shouting out “My two thousand,” the other “My thousand dollars,” they again flew at each other, and began mutually to search with one hand, whilst they held on firmly with the other.

The mob assembled. They humanely, after the manner of mobs, encouraged the two beggars in their buffetings, and, with roars of laughter, jeered at them both. No one believed the story of the robbery, or could suppose that two such tattered mendicants could be possessed of any coin at all. At last, the Alguazils made their appearance, and unhesitatingly giving both Tomazo and Pietro a most commendable cudgelling, they lodged them in the common jail for the night.

The cudgelling and the imprisonment, aided by their enforced fast, brought them so far to their senses, as to convince them of the necessity of silence about their late wealth, if they intended to possess any for the future. So, when out of the prison next morning, they again groped their way to the church, without uttering a single word to each other, determined that, henceforward, they would beg apart.

The Don came home a comparatively rich but a very dissatisfied man. He was firmly convinced that he had obeyed a miraculous instruction. Yet was he ill at ease. Accordingly, he determined early next morning to go to the confessional, and settle the matter with his conscience as amicably as he could.

With this view, next day, he repaired to the church; not much liking to turn his eyes towards the now really wo-begone beggars, he asked to confess to the sub-prior.

Having expressed to him, in the first place, his remorse and his sincere penitence for his impious remarks on the relics, and being promised absolution upon the performing of some trifling penance, the Don proceeded to state, that he had fasted much, and prayed almost constantly since, that he might be relieved from the penury and misery that were fast driving him to the grave. That Saint Ignatius had appeared to him in a vision, and told him to repair to his shrine the next day,

and that he would there receive further instructions. That he had so done, and remained in prayer and abstraction for more than an hour, and then, it was strongly borne in upon his mind, that he heard a voice proceeding from the mouth of the saint, which bade him to look around, and that he would find a treasure. He then faithfully related to the priest the scene between the two blind beggars, and concluded by saying that he was willing either to restore the whole of the money, if it were a device of Satan to tempt him into the commission of theft, or to keep it, as a miraculous interposition of the saint, according as his ghostly adviser should dictate. He added also, if the latter were the case, that he intended to offer one hundred of the dollars at the altar of his patron.

The sub-prior was not in doubt for a moment. "My son," said he, "it is a miracle, and shall be a recorded one. The caitiffs to have so much money! and all plundered from the credulity of the faithful. It is a turning of charity, one of the cardinal virtues, into a sin. Thou hast done well. For this good deed I absolve you from the penance enjoined you for your evil speaking. Give me the hundred dollars. That is well. Go home, and be happy in the conviction that you are favoured by the blessed Ignatius."

And the Don went home, a happy, and, in his own estimation, an upright man. It was a beautiful sight

that of his first meeting with his daughter after this very doubtful transaction. Her radiant joy to see him joyful, and then the gradual sorrowing of her lovely countenance as he proceeded in his relation until it became anguish and then horror.

Pope has said, "Most women have no character at all." He was decidedly in the wrong. He should have said but few women have a fair opportunity to display it. Hitherto, Jasmina had permitted others to act for her. She now was determined to act for herself. She entreated, she begged, she threw herself at her father's feet, and bathed his hands with her tears, but it was not until she had threatened to leave him and hide herself in some distant nunnery, that she was able to extort from her father his suddenly acquired wealth. But there was still the hundred dollars in the iron fangs of the sub-prior. She had taken her resolution instantly.

In one little hour she was in the church. She saw the two blind beggars kneeling far apart and begging fervently. She went up to the younger one, and in a gentle yet tremulous voice said to him, "I am Jasmina of the house of Boza. You wished to touch my hand. Take it."

The man trembled violently.

"Arise, my friend," she continued, "there is another hand that you should take that you ought to prefer to that of any others, at least just now."

The man obeyed passively. She then led him to his old comrade in beggary, and before they were aware of their proximity, she had placed the right hand of one in that of the other.

“Hush!” she continued, “if you respect me, be silent. I am very grateful to you both—and I come, I trust, to make you both happy. When I had it to give, I gave. You have proved to us, in our poverty, that you remembered me. I and my father thank you. I come not now to give, but to restore. You have wronged each other. It was a third person who plucked from you your money. Pietro, there is all yours. You are not so rich as your companion, and besides have ties. Tomazo, when you have counted your stock, you will find it short by one hundred dollars. I go to procure them ; wait in this spot for one hour.”

Saying this, she tripped away lightly, leaving the blind beggars in a paroxysm of astonishment and joy, endeavouring to invent some new and energetic form of blessing.

Jasmina immediately requested to see the Prior. Being well known, as who in Segovia knew her not?—several priests of several ages were anxious to confess her, supposing that she had come for the purpose ; but she would speak to none but the Prior. Her eagerness of manner at length struck them, and she was shown into a particular confessional. She had not remained

there long before a voice scarcely audible bade her commence.

Being very much excited, she obeyed immediately, and in no whisper. "Holy father, I am the only daughter, and almost the last living of the noble house of La Boza. Had it not been for my forefathers, this priory and this church, and the pomp, and the display, and the opulence of this institution had never been. You have now driven us to the last verge of poverty. Death or disgrace are before us. You, O Prior, know too well which will be our choice. You also know that you have commenced this last litigation against us most unrighteously, as the very deeds that are needful to us are deposited in your archives for their security and ours."

"This is dreadful," murmured a voice from the unseen. "Maiden, proceed : a friend listens."

"But of this I come not now to speak. We have no money to carry on the suit. I only seek to prolong my father's days, and to prevent his poverty from driving him to desperation, his desperation into crime. Give me the hundred dollars that my father gave you here three hours since. There is every lock of my hair. It is closely shorn, priest, according to your practice with our family. Take the hair and give me the money. I have no confession to make to you."

"But you have, my daughter—poor wronged maiden,

you have. Tell me all. I am not the sub-prior, but the Prior, once the Marquis of Altevedia, and in my youth your father's intimate friend. I reside principally at Rome, and have been inducted but lately into this government. Now, Jasmina de la Boza, tell me all." And she told all with the pathos of sincerity, and the overflowing of filial affection. The old man invisible, sobbed audibly.

We have but little more to say. The virgin got her headdress. Tomazo got his hundred dollars, and the two blind beggars were seen to beg no more. Don Alphonso Montamieja got a portion of his estate and his title-deeds restored to him; the sub-prior got suspended for one year, and got reproved by the Pope for being too anxious for the prosperity of his monastery. In his latter years, a thing that was deemed physically impossible, Jasmina's father grew fat and less proud;—but who got the peerless daughter for a wife this record sayeth not.

UPON THE GLISTENING FOUNTAIN.

BY E. SCAIFE.

UPON the glistening fountain,
 Upon each bending bough,
There's a light, like that of gladness
 On childhood's cloudless brow.
On the hoar tops of the forest,
 Is a glow of Heaven's own birth ;
All things breathe of beauty,
 Lady-love, come forth !

On the lake the white sail glimmers,
 The shade is on the hill ;
Fair flowers look up to Heaven,—
 Loveliest, all is still.
O, come, and drink the freshness
 That is poured upon the earth ;
Come, for nature calls aloud,
 Lady-love, come forth !





THE HARVESTERS.

COME away, bonny May, we'll be married to-day,
Nay, now, turn not your head nor look coy,
You remember, last autumn at planting, the way
That you served me—your own farmer boy.

“They are sowing,” you said with a smile, as my love
I was pleading; “dear Willie, and we
May as well let the winter pass over, and prove
What the promise of harvest may be!”

Then, to think of your answer, last spring when the grain
Shot up bright, and as green as the wave!
When the wild blossoms spangled the meadow and plain,
Do you know what an answer you gave?

“Ah! Willie,” you said, with a blush, “it is true
That the promise of harvest is fair,
But before 'tis in ear, there are frosts to go through,
And, it may be, rude storms in the air!”

Well, the corn had its frost and its storms, May, and *we*
Had our showers and slight gales, as you know ;
But our love and the corn grew the brighter to view,
For the breezes that bent them so low.

When the corn was in ear, you looked pale as you said,
“ ’Tis not ripe, dear ! you’re not twenty-one ;
Then just think how your father will rave, if you wed
One so poor, when the mischief is done ! ”

Now the harvest is ripe, like our love, gentle May,
And the reapers their sickles prepare ;
I am just twenty-one, May, this bright summer day,
So I thought I’d come in for my share !

Though my father may threaten and fume for a while,
Yet this farm is my own, every rood ;
So my May’s gentle smile shall his anger beguile,
And my mother will settle the feud.

Then away, bonny May ! let us go, pretty lass,
Where the parson makes one out of twain !
As my arm, round your waist, like a sickle I pass,
I will gather and garner my grain.

THE WEDDING.

BY THE HONOURABLE CHARLES PHIPPS.

“ I WONDER who will be there ?”—Such was the inquiry of Emily Lawrenson, in reply to the notification of her aunt, that it was time to dress for Lady Dunsley’s ball. Now I have often observed that this expression of wonder is but seldom dictated by a wish to ascertain what are likely to be the component parts that will form the collective society to be visited—a matter which is, indeed, upon such occasions of comparative insignificance—but is launched as an experimental cruiser, to endeavour to discover the probable locality of some individual, he or she, upon whom the expectation of pleasure or disappointment chiefly depends.

“ Oh ! all the world will be there !” was the answer of her aunt, as she took up her candle and retired to the interesting occupation of the toilette.

Although it must be allowed that, to a moderate or easily contented mind, the promise of so little exclusive a party must contain very satisfactory assurance of the

one object of interest being included in the sweeping collection, yet a more particular detail was necessary to tranquillize the anxiety of Emily, and it was with but little prospect of enjoyment that she likewise betook herself to the task, which nature had in her case rendered so much less requisite.

But three short months had passed since Emily Lawrenson resided in the quiet and secluded vicarage which had afforded to her father for more than fifty years a refuge from the cares of the world, and a field for the exercise of those virtues which had made his life a flowery course of happiness and content. In that spot, and in uninterrupted repose, had she passed through the laughing hours of childhood; the matured ideas of youth had there been carefully trained and cultivated, and she had now arrived at womanhood with no other adventure to ruffle the smooth stream of life, but such as might be caused by the common casualties of domestic superintendence, the duties of which the early loss of her mother had entailed upon her.

It is usual in fictitious narratives to place the scene of romantic incident invariably in the country; and forests and verdant meads, glades and cottages, are almost as necessary to a love scene in a novel, as a tall dark young man and a lady with beauty that surpasses the powers of description; but it is not so in real mundane existence—the even tenor of rustic events is too placid

for extraordinary incident, though little circumstances may appear by comparison of great importance; and I verily believe that there are often more ingredients for the composition of an interesting story, collected round the tea and buttered toast of a citizen's back parlour, than could be extracted from a whole country parish.

The life of our heroine was at least a testimony in favour of my argument. Eighteen years of sameness and regularity at Ashton rectory had waxed and dwindled undistinguished by any events that could claim the most remote affinity to romance—except the rejected addresses of Sir Henry Hardset, the neighbouring squire, or the budding, but early nipped passion of Mr. Hoskins, the curate. Far different, however, was to be her lot when, shortly after her eighteenth birthday, she received an invitation from her aunt, Norris Hamerton, to spend the season with her in London. This aunt was the possessor of immense riches; and having the year before quarrelled with, and abandoned a favourite nephew, because he ruined himself by making what is called “a good book” upon the turf, she had been since looking out for some one upon whom to settle her affections and her wealth, and hearing that Emily Lawrenson possessed beauty, accomplishments, and good temper, she summoned her from her retirement to become her companion and her heiress. Dr. Lawrenson hailed with delight this promising demonstration of regard towards

his otherwise portionless child, and at once accepted the flattering proposal, and within a week Emily found herself for the first time a participator in the gaieties of a full London season.

It is unnecessary to say that our heroine was beautiful; had she been otherwise, nobody would have thought it worth while to record her history in the pages of the "Offering;"—that she was well educated and accomplished arose from the union of excellent natural taste and careful tuition; that she was pure, virtuous, and affectionate, was the certain consequence of the unfailing example of her almost faultless parent; but that she was not perfect must be attributed to the circumstances of her being a real created being, and not the offspring of the heated imagination of a romantic author.

With the reputation of being "a fortune" to attract attention, and such qualifications to excite admiration, it will not be thought extraordinary that the new star had its full share of worshippers, with the other luminaries of the hemisphere, and that Emily's appearance was hailed with as large a tribute of compliments and flattery as is usually paid to the fair and rich. But the mind of Emily was too well guarded by the precept and practice of her instructor to be elevated by the idle adulation of London dangles, though the weakness of human nature caused her to feel some little gratification at the universal sensation that she evidently excited; it

would be well for many that I know if all young ladies granted as limited a credence to the declared, or implied assurance, that their beauty is unrivalled, and their wit and talents the delight of society, as did the rustic daughter of a retired clergyman upon her first introduction to the dazzling fairy scenes of fashion's halls.

Somewhat distinguished from the many young men who had fluttered for a time around the blaze of her beauty, and then with wings more or less singed, flitted to be completely maimed by some other flame, was one whom Emily at first met with feelings of peculiar dislike, and almost of fear—it was Harry Ormonde—who has not heard that name?—that magic name, the false passport under which a modest witling introduces his own doubtful good things—the sponsor of various and varying fashions:—in short, he, the *recherché* of society, the idol of the clubs, the admired, the talented, the handsome, and the gay, “the observed of all observers.” This brilliant accumulation of recommendations, which had placed Ormonde at the very pinnacle of distinction in the best society, had failed to excite the admiration, even the approbation, of our heroine. The accounts that were so assiduously circulated of his thousand and one conquests, and his as easy and as frequent desertion of the once eagerly sought prize, appeared to her but as the records of heartlessness and vanity; his oft-repeated bon-mots conveyed to

her understanding the idea more of ill-nature and of flippancy than of wit, and the accounts of his peculiarity and judgment in dress stamped his character in her opinion with more of foppishness and effeminacy than good taste. She therefore, for some time, carefully and successfully avoided the acquaintance of Colonel Henry Ormonde.

About three weeks after her arrival in London, she accompanied Mrs. Hamerton to a dinner-party, at the house of Lord Oakington, his lordship not being less celebrated for his excellent provisions for the first half of that compound word, than his well-experienced consort was for selecting the not less essential ingredients for the second. After an unusually long infliction of twilight and formality in the drawing-room, the usual dual procession took place to the dining-room, and Emily found herself drawn, in the lottery of handing down, by Lord Oxley, the eldest son of the excellent host and hostess, an individual of peculiar taciturnity, and one whose only discrimination between young ladies was, those whom he would, and those whom he would not, propose to. In the arrangement of the table, Emily observed that my Lady Oakington, who in general interested herself but little in the relative location of her guests, evinced, for her, an extraordinary degree of activity to retain the one remaining place between herself and Emily vacant. ✓

Why this Banquo's chair was thus reserved in the very place of honour was for some time a mystery, but just as the fish and soup had been removed, the whole was explained by the entrance of a person, the warmth of whose reception would have of itself proved his position not to be perfectly accidental. Emily saw enough of his outward appearance as he glided to his seat, and whispered an apology to Lady Oakington, in which "House of Commons" was the only part audible, to ascertain that his was one of those countenances that bear away the palm of manly beauty from all the regular features and Antinous faces, that would enchant the painter and the modellist, and by the time that our heroine had decided this point she became aware that she too was undergoing the furtive scrutiny of her newly arrived neighbour. There is nothing more disagreeable than the consciousness of being looked at, particularly when the part most proper for the subject of inspection to enact, is ignorance of being under observation; it was, therefore, a great relief to her when with ease and without affectation the unknown entered into conversation, and she had become quite amused, and very nearly pleased with him, before the casual invitation of—"Ormonde, a glass of wine?" let her into the secret of who her agreeable acquaintance was.

This, then, was the dangerous, the all-conquering individual of whom she had heard so much. She felt disappointed—she hardly knew why—but he certainly

was not the sort of person that she had expected. His dress, which she had been prepared to find peculiarly finical and *outré*, was remarkable only for its excessive simplicity ; and though there was nothing in it that the most critical judge could object to, there was no one point that the most minute examiner could notice as unusual. His conversation, in spite of herself, had interested her, and though she thought that in all he said she could trace that hidden vein of satire which she had dreaded, yet his attacks were so general, and his fancy so playful, that she imagined that few could be personally wounded by them, whilst many who were pleased might also be improved by the application of his remarks, and she soon found herself not only laughing at his sallies, but occasionally assisting with a half timid observation of her own, which partook too much of the character of quizzing to satisfy her conscience, upon a subsequent examination of the events of that day.

Upon the arrival of the ladies after dinner in the drawing-room, all, including Lady Oakington, (whom to say the truth Ormonde had somewhat slighted in his attention to Emily,) fell so violently upon him, and abused with so much warmth the deceptive cunning of his character, that our heroine began to fear that she also had become a victim to the fascination of this rattlesnake, and she mentally determined, by constantly

avoiding his society, to secure for the future her name from being added to the list of his victims.

I know not whether it arose from this determination (for such is the effect that it usually produces), or from what other accident, that Emily found herself constantly afterwards in the company of Henry Ormonde ; at dinners he was generally her neighbour ; when he came into the first tier at the opera the box-keeper mechanically opened Mrs. Hamerton's box ; he was her constant partner at balls ; and she at last observed that her horse Orlando, amidst all the steeds in the park recognised with eye and ear the approach of Ormonde's gray.

For a long time did Emily endeavour to keep up her deeply rooted prejudice against the character of her agreeable admirer, but when in the course of their acquaintance she casually discovered that many of his oft-repeated, most witty, and severest sayings, were greater novelties to him than to any one else—that some of his ill-used intimate friends were utter strangers to him even by name—and that not a few of the compassionated victims of his transient adoration had never received more worship from him than was conveyed in a passing bow—she began to imagine that, perhaps in the worldly estimation of his principles and actions, envy might have a little warped the judgment of some, and disappointment have soured the opinion of others.

It would carry me beyond the limits of my task were I to attempt to describe the nice gradations by which, from a sense of having committed an injustice towards Ormonde, the mind of Emily commenced with allowing itself to be amused, then interested by him, until the kindly feeling being transplanted to the heart it there sprouted and grew into a flourishing affection. When once rooted, the breast of Emily was a soil in which such an affection was sure rapidly to increase, for hers was one of those enthusiastic natures not easily won, but that when once overcome, her devotion was infinite. Let not my readers be shocked, because I have communicated to them the delicate secret of my heroine's preference, without having narrated any previous declaration of a similar passion on the part of Ormonde, for no such verbal confession had taken place; but never does love exist between two persons, meeting daily in society, without the mutual certainty of the delightful truth far outstripping the tardy determination of putting forth those most sacred thoughts in the colder form of words. Harry, perhaps, was little conscious of the overwhelming power of his passion, but long had her observation of it been balm to the heart of Emily; she would have been miserable had she imagined that any one could have discovered the most delicate, the most hidden feeling of her soul; but the rising colour, the beaming glance of pleasure at meeting—many, many little circumstances, valueless and without meaning to

others, had assured Ormonde that his dearest hopes were crowned with success.

The season was now nearly over, and matters had made but little progress : indeed the nature of their intercourse was more likely to foster and encourage the mutual affection which was daily increasing, than to conduce to that happy climax—so desirable in the eyes of *chaperons*—a proposal ! for they rarely met except in public. Mrs. Hamerton, who considered that with her wealth the chief requisites to be sought for in the marriage of her niece were rank and high birth, had fixed her choice upon the Lord Oxley, to whom we have before been introduced at Lord Oakington's, and the prudent aunt, discovering that neither the personal nor mental qualifications of her *protégé* were made to appear more brilliant by comparison with those of his gay rival, discouraged the visits and intimacy of the latter at her own house, though his appearance in their train in public lent an *éclat* both to herself and niece in the eyes of the world, to which she was far from objecting. It was, therefore, but in the midst of the giddy and the heartless—in the very palaces of duplicity—in the courts of apathy and selfishness—that had grown up between them as hallowed, as deeply-rooted an affection, as though their trysting-place had been the shade of the forest—as though the moon alone had lighted them to their rendezvous, and the nightingale had been the only witness to their plighted vows.

We will pass over all intermediate scenes, and bring our reader back (indeed it is almost time) to the night on which we left Mrs. Hamerton and her niece preparing for Lady Dunsley's ball. Emily had but little disposition for going out that evening, and descended from her dressing-room jaded and tired with constant excitement; but the exercise of Mam'selle Constance's skill had been particularly successful in assisting, and indeed repairing by the aid of art, those charms in the face and form of Mrs. Hamerton, which time had been likewise attempting to beautify by the same process by which it adds to the value of gothic castles and port wine, but not with equal satisfactory results. In the volubility of her own high spirits, therefore, the good aunt neither heeded nor discovered the silence of our heroine, as she chatted and laughed throughout the long drive to Lady Dunsley's villa, upon the borders of Kensington.

On their arrival, Emily in vain glanced through the crowd in search of that well-known form whose presence constituted now for her all the enjoyment of society. He was not there; she *felt* that he was not there: the least glimpse of those features—the sight of the outline of his manly figure—the sound of but one word of that musical voice, she must have recognised. She had, indeed, not expected to meet him, for he had told her in the morning's ride that there was likely to be a long debate in the House of Commons, and as she gave up

the hope, and followed her aunt who was ploughing her way through the crowd, she felt that the party, with all of wit and beauty, with all of luxury and magnificence which it contained, was a blank to her. She laughed, however, and talked and danced with the rest, for more than once had a hint been thrown out by some one of her partners, that he could divine the cause of her absence of mind, and she was determined to be upon this occasion so guarded, that no one should be able to imagine that the presence of any individual was necessary to her enjoyment.

In the midst of her good resolutions, but a few words spoken in a hurried tone in the doorway near to where she was dancing, completely upset her composure of countenance and equanimity, and she had been twice reminded that her *vis-à-vis* was enacting an unnecessary cavalier *seul*, before she could withdraw her attention from the simple announcement—"No! the House is not up yet; but I was bored, and paired off." But the voice spoke to her heart; the words even, commonplace in themselves, had for her a meaning, intelligible to no one else. Well, full well, she knew what was the cause that made those duties irksome which he had formerly followed with so much enthusiasm and so much success; and as she traced his progress towards the area of the dance, by his salutation to his acquaintances as he passed them, she felt her colour rising in her lovely cheeks, her eyes acquired a brilliancy, her steps an

elastic grace, and with a gladdened countenance, in which Happiness seemed proud to share the throne with Beauty, as the figure of the quadrille brought her opposite to the door, the glance of Emily met the eager look of Ormonde. Hers was an expression of unmitigated pleasure, but a cloud passed over his brow, and, with the waywardness of man's affection, he felt angry that she should have seemed in spirits during his absence, for little did he know that the consciousness of his presence had caused the change both in her mind and appearance.

Shortly after the dance was over, Henry offered her his arm to see some fireworks which were to be exhibited in the garden; and the renovated attractions of Mrs. Hamerton having secured the attendance of some *ci-devant* admirer, they proceeded to the lawn.

"You seem to have enjoyed your party much, Miss Lawrenson," said Ormonde, in a tone of pique, as they descended the steps from the verandah.

"Indeed I have liked it much more than I expected," she answered: "but they must be thoroughly out of spirits whom the sight of so many happy people, the sound of so many merry voices, with the glitter of light and the harmony of music, cannot enliven."

"Do you consider, then," he inquired, "that the delights of society consist altogether in the mirth of the noisy, the rattling nonsense of the idle, the glare of wax candles, and the squeaking of fiddles?"

“No, no—not altogether,” said Emily laughing; “but I own I think them all, even down to the ridiculed fiddle, to be very good ingredients to a prescription for the cure of depression. I think, Colonel Ormonde, you have not always had so truly hermit-like a current of ideas.”

“Perhaps not; perhaps I have much changed some of my opinions; but I believe at present I can only plead having been bored at the House, and being out of humour.”

“It is not fair, then,” she continued, “to transplant your ill humour from its native wilderness, that horrible man-forest, the House of Commons, to this greenhouse of all that is richest and most rare: you should assimilate yourself to the atmosphere you breathe.”

“My feelings,” he interrupted, now really becoming angry, “are not quite of so pliable a nature, that they can be bent to accommodate themselves to every momentary circumstance: my content and enjoyment are neither to be lit up by the flame of a candle, nor to be charmed by the tones of these modern Orpheuses. I may return your sarcasm, Miss Lawrenson, and remark that you were not always so worldly.”

“We do not always mean exactly what we say, and seldom, seldom indeed, say exactly what we mean,” said she, half thinking aloud.

“Oh, how truly are those words spoken!” he exclaimed ardently; “how seldom even do we cherish those sentiments in our hearts that our words, our

actions would declare; and yet, to find one who has appeared all simplicity and softness, the admirer of the follies of the world, the bandier of sharp and cutting sayings, is a change that even my experience of that world had not prepared me for."

"Your words bear so little the disguise even of common civility, Colonel Ormonde," replied Emily, stung to the quick by this harsh accusation, "that it is impossible to mistake the person for whom they are intended. There is nothing in the terms or length of our acquaintance that can make me responsible to you, and therefore I should consider all defence as uncalled for, as it must be unnecessary."

"Is there nothing," he whispered, in a tone of deep emotion, coming close to her—"is there nothing to create a bond between us? Is it possible that devotion is so common to you, that you have valued as nothing a passion that has made me your very shadow—which has taught me to model my every act, ay, my most trivial jest, to endeavour to gain your approval? It cannot be!—But you triumph in your power, whilst you despise its slave. Much I could have borne, but not coldness: hatred, obloquy, reproach, but not unfeeling satire. And yet I thought that I had at least obtained the place of a friend—that I might have——"

"Come, my dear Emily," interrupted Mrs. Hamerton, stepping in between them; "this place is terribly cold

and damp, and we had better be going, for you know that you are not strong. I dare say Colonel Ormonde will call the carriage for us:—dear me, is he gone?”

Too plainly had Emily witnessed his departure, too clearly had she marked the expression of his countenance, and too audible to her ear had been the muttered oath with which he had rushed into the thickest of the dark mass of human beings, now undistinguishable in the general gloom, and now brightly illuminated in the glare of artificial light.

How little causes may sometimes produce great effects! Had the old admiral, who had been Mrs. Hamerton's escort to the fireworks, not been afraid of the rheumatism, and retreated; had the good lady herself not detected the very unbecoming effect of blue lights upon a neighbour's face, and naturally imagined that they would not have a much more decorative influence over the handiwork of Mam'selle Constance; had Ormonde not moved that one step nearer to the object of his adoration, which brought them exactly into that juxtaposition which chaperons consider in elder sons most laudable, and in younger brothers highly improper, the prudent aunt would never have interfered, and two persons, whose very existence depended upon the favour of the other, would not have separated mutually irritated.

How perplexing, how varied were the thoughts that passed through Emily's mind as they drove home!

The declaration had been made—but how?—not in the pleading and humble tone of timid supplication, but in the confident and almost insulting language of reproach; and yet, though the avowal had nothing in its mode of expression to soothe or please, though it informed her of no fact that she had not, through more flattering means, been assured of before, yet it was consolatory to her heart to plead as an excuse for the absorbing affection which she felt in her breast, that he had poured forth the acknowledgment of his devotion. Much was there to regret in his petulance and ill temper, but she could not entirely acquit herself from the charge of flippancy and frivolity; and though we may in the ardour of the moment rejoice in the victory of an argument, or revel in a sharp and cutting repartee, bitter is afterwards the recollection of having caused the confusion of some friend, or wounded the feelings of some one we love. “We must both plead for forgiveness when next we meet,” she mentally determined as the carriage stopped at their door in Grosvenor Street.

Alas, poor girl! little did she foresee the painful announcement that awaited her. Upon entering the hall, the porter put into her hands a letter which had been forwarded by express, and which contained the afflicting intelligence of the dangerous illness of her father. All other ideas were now absorbed in anxiety for that adored parent. Ormonde, her doubts, her love, were all forgotten; and with but two short hours of

preparation, she was on the road to Ashton rectory. As she approached her home, her nervous excitement increased with every moment. She looked at each casual passenger that she met, as though his countenance could convey some information of the state of the sufferer; she gazed with strained and tearful eyes at the well-known vicarage, as though the house would bear some outward token of the situation of its tenant; she accused herself of want of affection in having left him, who, from the day of her birth, had never deserted her; and it was not until she found herself established in attendance by the sick man's bedside, that her cheek again regained its usual colour, and her heart its usual pulsation.

By degrees the disorder of Dr. Lawrenson gave way to the skill with which he was treated, and the care with which he was nursed; but many an anxious and fatiguing night of vigilance had poor Emily passed in the sick room, with no employment but to administer to the selfish wishes of peevish suffering, and no companion but the perplexity of her own contradictory thoughts. Her bodily health suffered severely by the confinement; her cheek began to bear the livery, as it were, of the room; her eye lost its clear brilliancy; and her mind was sinking into despondency from the constant influence of doubt and fear. Many, many weeks had passed; she had received constantly letters from her aunt, but in no one of them was even mentioned

that name which was the first object of her search in looking through the otherwise uninteresting scrawl. Had he then never remarked the absence, or inquired the cause of the departure of one for whom he had professed such an intensity of affection? Had he then so soon forgotten her, or from so slight a cause of disagreement had he struggled with and conquered his passion?—For it never entered into her speculation that it was possible that the anxious inquiries of Ormonde could be a matter of so little interest to her aunt as to be thought unworthy of record; or less still that her good-natured protectress could have any object in concealing from her the eagerness of his constant questions.

As her father became less tenacious of the exclusive appropriation of her attendance, she was recommended to pass much of her time out of doors, and to endeavour, by the assistance of her native air, to regain that bloom, and elasticity both of body and mind, which was gradually sinking under the working of her secret unhappiness. She had been tempted upon one bright autumn afternoon, by the buoyancy of the atmosphere and the cheering warmth of the sun, to prolong her walk to the neighbouring town of Ashton, to execute some of the long arrear of commissions that her confinement to the house had left unperformed. She had nearly completed her purchases, and was upon her return home through the principal street, when the first glimpse of a man in

deep mourning, who was approaching her on horseback, agitated her to a degree almost too great for her debilitated frame. She could not be deceived; even at that distance, that form, that face, that distinguished air, were too much the subject of every daily vision, each nightly dream, not to be instantly recognised. What should she do? Her first impression was to turn away and avoid him. But the one glance that she had ventured to direct towards him had made her aware that his eyes were fixed upon her; and to shun him so decidedly would exhibit too marked an interest. There were many arguments that decided her to meet him—but how?—Should she receive him as her heart prompted, or should she by a cold appearance of indifference reproach him for his long neglect? Who under similar circumstances ever came to any decision? With a throbbing heart, a flushed and glowing cheek, and eyes cast down, she continued her course. One furtive look still assured her that he regarded her attentively. She heard him approach nearer and nearer; each heavy sound of his horse's hoof upon the narrow paved street seemed to beat upon her ear: he was close to her—he was at her side—she could almost hear him breathe—but without a word, without a single symptom of recognition, he passed her by; and as she traced the same clattering sound until it died away in distance, it required all her determination to check the tears that

were ready to burst forth. Was it possible?—Was she then slighted, nay, almost insulted by him whom she had made the idol of her affections? She was certain that he had seen her; she had felt that his eyes were fixed upon her; and even without the common salutation of politeness, he had heedlessly gone by *her* whom but a few weeks before he had professed to love with a zealot's devotion. Weak and overcome with anxiety and fatigue, she entered a shop to repose herself; and she overheard, in the course of a casual conversation between two persons there, that the famous Colonel Ormonde had joined his brother at a house that had belonged to an uncle of theirs who had lately died. This then put an end to her last fragile thread of hope, that she might by possibility have been deceived in the person, and she returned to her home tired, exhausted, and feeble in body; abased, wretched, and miserable in heart.

Poor Emily's health gradually became more and more precarious, under the sad and humiliating consciousness of her unrequited passion; for still, in spite of all, at the bottom of her heart lay buried, deeply but securely enshrined, far beyond the power of argument or of reason, the attachment which she flattered herself was giving way to the suggestions of offended pride. But severely did her body suffer by this perpetual conflict in her mind between duty and tenderness. The world may disbelieve, the free may scoff at the accounts of

the heart-broken and the disappointed, who fade and fall like blighted leaves amidst the brightness and sunshine of the world—but how many carry to the grave the hallowed secret of enthusiastic love, denied even to their own more prudent conviction: how many disorders, were all bosoms opened, and all concealment at an end, would be found to have borne the blame for the sure and fatal destruction of blasted hopes and forgotten troth?

Long did the gradually sinking girl struggle with her increasing weakness: she could not endure the idea of again quitting her home, as was proposed, and rejoining her aunt, who was now living on the coast of Devonshire. She fought resolutely against her malady. She strove to meet her aged father, who was now quite recovered, with a smile: she endeavoured to give her languid frame the semblance of strength, to make her tottering step more firm when he was by; but debility came on with a stealthy but never-resting pace. Her short walk, though daily curtailed, became daily an exertion of greater fatigue; and at last the physician who attended her spoke in such terms to Dr. Lawrenson as seriously to excite his alarm, and it was determined that in a few days she should set out for Sidmouth, accompanied by her old governess, who was still resident as a pensioner on her father's bounty.

The last day of home arrived. Who that has ever quitted a place dear to them from association or from

habit, but knows the bitterness of every minute of that day? On leaving a spot indifferent to us, yet if many of our days have been passed in its neighbourhood, the recollection of some happy hours, some scenes of kindness and enjoyment, will arise to throw a shade of melancholy over the moment of farewell. What must then have been the agony of our heroine, who was about to leave the peaceful haven of her youth, to meet again but the storms and buffets of a heartless world? The time had arrived when she must again abandon that home where happiness alone had been her lot; where kindness had gone before her asking; where the tenderest care had guarded the days of helplessness and childhood; where the warmth of affection had hailed the harvest of her beauty and virtue;—and what was she to seek elsewhere? The society of her good-natured but frivolous aunt; the hypocrisy, the selfishness, the cruelty that had seared her unsuspecting confidence—the ingratitude that had broken her ingenuous heart. “And can,” thought she, “the softness of a balmy breeze, the salutary influence of the ocean’s air, have such a power over wretchedness as to repay me for this change? Oh, no! let me remain here—if to die, to die where my last sigh will be whispered to kindly ears; but if to recover, to see the bright smile that will hail the advent of each new cause of hope, to enjoy the boon of health where affection may hallow, where peace may insure its stay.” But why dwell on so sad a scene?

Why recount those moments of utter wretchedness when the venerable parent fixed his dim eyes on the fast-receding carriage that bore from him the gem of his age, the last worldly object of affection to which he clung, torn from him, as he thought, for ever?

She had left her home: she had travelled for many days, but her progress had been comparatively inconsiderable, as the utmost caution was necessary to preserve her debilitated constitution from all unnecessary fatigue; and her weariness proceeded not only from the exertion of the journey—no, the labour of the mind inflicts far more lassitude on the body than does the healthy exercise of the limbs. No herculean task wears the frame so much as the cruel and unceasing industry of ever-active unhappiness.

It chanced that in the course of their travel our invalid and her careful attendant arrived at a little village, at which they were tempted to pass the night, not only from the remarkable beauty of the surrounding country, but from an air of cleanliness and excessive quiet and seclusion that characterized the inn at which they took up their abode. On the morning after their arrival, Emily strolled into the churchyard with her kind-hearted old governess, to obtain a better position from which to look at the rich and extensive prospect that was extended in the valley below.

“How lovely, how soothing is such a sight as this!” she said, more thinking aloud than addressing Martha

Hartland, who, though a most attached creature, had few romantic ideas. "How much the view of this vast extent of the produce of rich cultivation, and the more luxuriant gifts of prodigal nature, raises the ideas from the grovelling cares of self. Hark!—Do you hear that buzz of merry voices, the echoes of that careless happy laugh?—Who, when he sees such scenes of content and prosperity, and listens to the sounds of mirth and overflowing joy, shall dare to upbraid or murmur at a bounteous Providence because one breast is stricken with care, the hopes of an individual crushed and disappointed?"

"It is a beautiful prospect certainly, Miss Lawrenson," replied her companion, "but it appears to me that there may be found some more immediate cause of hilarity than is to be accounted for by picturesque scenery and a good harvest. There are symptoms in the village there of some feast, or merry-making, or wedding; for, look, there are festoons of flowers, and white favours, and ribands floating across the street below, and what beautiful wreaths hung in that tree! There is one house has some letters made in artificial roses—initials most likely. Let me see: I can hardly make them out. H. I see, and then L., and then O.?—yes, O., and I think M., but it is just at the angle of the house. I wonder who the happy couple can be? The lord of the manor perhaps. L. O. M., you know, does very well;

or, perhaps, H. L. is the gentleman's name, and O. M. the lady's—Olivia perhaps."

It is impossible to say how long Mrs. Hartland's speculations might have been continued, had they not been interrupted by the not less voluble but more powerful clatter of the church-bells, which just at that moment struck up the regular bridal-peal: at the same time that their sound testified to the justice of her guesses, it totally eclipsed the expression of her triumph. Emily, whose weak nerves could ill bear the jarring noise, continued her walk, leaning upon the arm of her loquacious friend. Too many sad thoughts and recollections were at work within her bosom for our heroine either to heed or reply to the thousand guesses and suppositions that Mrs. Hartland let loose as soon as ever a little distance from the vociferous gratulation of the belfry allowed her to become audible, and the course of her wonder was only interrupted by the occasional echoes of that most exciting of all welcomes, a hearty shout, which was heard at intervals from the village.

The poor invalid soon became tired with her walk, and as the peal had ceased, she determined to return gently to her room. When she arrived again at the churchyard, through which was the only route from the fields to the inn, she found it crowded with people; the ceremony was at that time going on; and Emily, seeing that it was impossible to force her way through the dense mass of spectators, sate down upon one of the

green mounds that rose thickly around, and throwing her bonnet on one side, enjoyed the freshness of the breeze. It seemed that some one in whom the whole neighbourhood was much interested was at that moment kneeling before the altar, for there were happy faces belonging to every class of life smiling around.

How bitterly the contrast struck to the heart of the poor sick child of grief! All—all around her were happy and rejoicing; the holy Word of God was even then affixing the seal of sanctity to the union of two perfectly blessed creatures, while the universal rejoicing of the rich and poor celebrated the triumph of love; while there alas! sate she, the victim of a passion not less pure, not less holy, the martyr of affection as devoted, reclining her wasted form upon the cold grave, of which she so shortly might become a tenant.*

“Let us try to get home,” said she faintly, as her strength gave way, and her mind sickened at the recollection of her utter misery.

But just at that moment a stir amongst the assembled crowd announced that the service was finished, and the happy pair were about to depart from the temple of God, for ever plighted to mutual support and love. The deepest silence reigned throughout the eager assembly broken only by an occasional suppressed whisper; all eyes were directed to the door; Emily arose with the rest, and also fixed her attention upon the spot from

which the procession was to come forth, with an anxiety that she could not comprehend.

She thought that she felt something pulling gently at her cloak as if modestly requesting her attention ; she looked down, and perceived a delicately formed Italian greyhound, that with half timid, half affectionate caresses was claiming her recognition. Oh ! well, too well did she remember that little animal ; but how came it there ? it belonged to Henry Ormonde : whom had it followed thither ? it was not, it could not be that he was then near to them. Poor Fido ! often and often had she fondled it in the days of her happiness, but now she shrunk from his playful gambols as though the display of his attachment had been tainted by the falsehood of his master. Wildly, hurriedly did her searching glance pierce the crowd in every direction, but in vain—he was not there, he could not have escaped the accuracy, the intenseness of that look. A loud shout told her that the bridegroom was leading his bride through the porch : she turned her head mechanically. What blasting sight was that that struck her like Heaven's bolt !—It was enough that, for one moment, a division of time as short as counts the course of light, her eyes had rested upon that newly-wedded pair. It was he ! ay ! it was his face smiling, and all-captivating as she, and she only, used to see it ! his countenance spoke that beaming fondness that once had shone upon her alone ; and leaning in confi-

dence upon his arm was a fair-haired girl, of beauty like an angel; her eyes sinking beneath the ardent gaze of affection, her cheeks glowing with modesty, and flushed with perfect happiness—one worthy of him in looks at least, and with a soft yet expressive countenance, that gave a promise of sweetness of nature within; to deck a life with daily blooming flowers of joy and ever increasing delight. She had seen it all—yes, all!—behind flocked a crowd of smiling and mirthful friends—that one momentary glance comprehended all—but at the same instant the scene whirled before her, bright globes of light danced before her eyes; her ideas became confused; she fancied she saw two Ormondes, that a confused mass of grinning fiends mocked and made mouths at her from behind, and tottering for a moment in the arms of her friend, she reeled and fell to the ground.

It was long after suspended animation was slowly and painfully restored to Emily before her confused recollection enabled her to determine either where she then was or what was that overwhelming event of which she had just been the unwilling witness. In that dreamy state which succeeds insensibility, she had sometimes fancied herself at her father's house, sometimes she had imagined that Henry was still the same as, when hers was the power of grief or gladness, he knelt at her feet and implored her pardon; at other times he walked proudly past her, or upbraided her with coldness and want of

feeling, but long, very long was it before she was thoroughly awakened to the reality of the last sad scene of the tragedy. The room was dark, and as her shattered senses gradually became collected, she heard two women conversing at a little distance from her bed.

“It is a strange circumstance,” said Mrs. Hartland, for she, and a nurse hired to assist her in her attendance were the parties, who were beguiling the tediousness of their attendance by some narrative.

“This had been an old attachment,” continued the other, “and the arrival of Colonel Ormonde was all that was waited for to marry the young couple. Ay! they are both of them loved by all around—joy go with them, say I.”

“Wo—wo! and the inward sting of an evil conscience go with him,” cried Emily, in a hollow voice, and rising in her bed with a momentary energy, excited by her boiling indignation at hearing this insulting prayer for the prosperity of her destroyer, in the very act that had struck the cruel blow. “Wo, and the self-accusing memory of base hypocrisy, the gnawing reproach of falsehood, accompany him! And yet,” she murmured, sinking back again from weakness, “*I* cannot call down misfortune on his head, *I* cannot plead for the just award of Heaven against him; for oh! I have loved him as man never yet was loved; the sound of his distant footstep has been music to me—the con-

sciousness of his being present, though I saw him not, made sunshine all around—the charm of memory, the trust of hope, have both been valued but as accompanied by his image ; and now, even now, the vision of long past hours that rises in my troubled mind suggests a blessing on him. May God bless him, and forgive his cruelty to a too confiding heart ! I shall in time forgive him too.”—And hiding her face, she burst into tears.

Her attendants, who had been watching her for days and nights, with an hourly decreasing hope of the return of reason, attributed her words still to the ravings of delirium, but hailed as a favourable symptom the flood of grief which had relieved her heart stretched almost to bursting. Long, very long did the refreshing flood continue to calm her wounded and perturbed feelings, and she afterwards fell into a dozing sleep, from which she was awakened by poor Fido, who had crept unperceived into the apartment, and lay couched upon a chair by her bedside, and was licking her hand. Again the association of mournful ideas bedewed her eyes, but from that moment that dog was never permitted to be for long away from her sight.

Mrs. Hartland had left the room, and the other attendant was sitting pursuing some noiseless occupation, and hardly breathing lest she should disturb the poor invalid, when Emily again feebly raised herself in her bed, and beckoning to the nurse, “Tell me,” she inquired, in faltering accents, “does he live near this place?”

“Who, ma’am?” inquired the astonished girl.

“He!—he that was married—he that you spoke of but now. Why—why would you force me to name him—there can be no doubt whom *I* ask for?”

“Oh yes, ma’am, he lives close by,” was the reply; “and since you have been ill, Colonel Ormonde has called here every day to inquire after you, and I heard him say that he hoped you would soon be well enough to see him.”

“See him! the God of mercies forbid!” almost shrieked Emily: “sooner let me die at once. This is no place for me to loiter in. Girl, go and desire Martha to come to me instantly—instantly; and desire that the carriage be ready this evening, in an hour’s time. Better far better were it to die by the roadside than to meet him again.”

With trembling anxiety, with prayers, with tears did Mrs. Hartland endeavour to divert the feeble girl from her resolute purpose. It was in vain; she was calm and quiet, but determined, and not to be changed. “I wish for obedience and not advice,” was her invariable reply to all arguments; and at last it was found that refusal to comply with her desire caused her so much excitement, that on the evening of the following day she was lifted to the carriage, in which a bed was prepared for her, and proceeded slowly, and by short stages, to join her aunt.

She never subsequently mentioned the events that took place at that inn, but once, and that was during the first day's journey, when she begged of Mrs. Hartland that she would maintain for ever the most inviolable silence upon what she had there witnessed. "Let it be blotted out as though those days had never been; let not even a hint awaken the frightful spectre of those departed hours. I must commence life afresh now, and wish to recall *nothing* of my former existence."

After this she by degrees became more composed, and she met her aunt even with cheerfulness; but her habitual expression was that of fixed and unvaried sadness, and yet she rarely wept, and the recital of another's happiness, the prospect of another's content could almost always wake a smile of benevolence upon her wo-worn countenance. She sought much consolation from religion, and it was remarked by her maid, that her tears invariably followed one particular passage of her prayers, and once, in the fervour of her petition, as she raised her glistening eyes to Heaven, the girl thought she heard a name softly breathed, but she could not tell whose name it was, and perhaps she was mistaken.

Her favourite companion was the little Italian greyhound, and never was protection more fully repaid by gratitude. The poor animal seemed so well to understand the will of his mistress, that he constrained the playful impulses of his nature to suit her saddened habits, and he seldom ventured upon any of those

graceful gambols in her presence, that he evidently delighted in so much in her absence.

The health of the poor sufferer was however evidently becoming daily worse ; a fixed languor and debility was sapping the very foundations of life, and it appeared as if, without any positive ailing, death had already asserted his claim to his victim, and was slowly but surely benumbing the heart of the sorrow-stricken girl.

The physicians, unable “to minister to a mind diseased,” prescribed change of scene and constant amusement. She never complained—she never objected to whatever system was recommended. They advised her to take more exercise—she walked daily. They begged her to go more into society—she joined again the long-deserted scenes, but she appeared more like a moving automaton than a creature of volition ; the mind—the will—a symptom of pleasure, even of a wish, was absent. She performed the task that was apportioned, and then returned to enjoy the luxury of wo.

They had been residing for some time at the quiet little village of Woodport, upon the verge of the sea, and the only moments that could be imagined to afford her comparative happiness, were those that she passed sitting on the beach, warmed by the rays of the departing sun, and caressing her little four-footed favourite. She was usually accompanied by only her maid-servant, for her gloomy society was not at all of the description

to engage the voluntary attendance of her merry aunt, and she ever preferred to be alone.

It was rather later than she usually remained out in an evening in June, that the servant, who had strayed in search of shells to some little distance from her mistress, was startled by hearing a faint scream, and turning round, beheld with alarm the expression of her lady's countenance. Her complexion, usually of a clear and transparent white, had assumed the livid colour of death; her eyes were fixed, and glaring with almost unearthly brightness; and her lips moved as if she were endeavouring to speak some hurried words, to which her voice refused to give utterance. In an instant after she hid her face for a short time in her hand, and when she looked up again her usual calmness composed every feature.

Two persons were approaching them, who were apparently engaged in deep conversation: one was a man who looked pale and dejected, but still retained all the traces of manly beauty; the other, leaning upon his arm, was a fair and delicate-looking woman, with bright locks, and eyes of "deep and most expressive blue:" they continued their progress towards Emily, but she moved not; one of her hands leaning upon a projecting rock, clung, as it were, to the only object near her for support and assistance. Poor Fido seemed to participate in his mistress's embarrassment; he barked at the first view of the intruders, but shortly looked up into Emily's

face as if for directions, and in a minute flying to the stranger overwhelmed him with caresses. Ormonde, (for it was indeed he,) startled at the vehemence of the little animal's welcome, looked up in surprise, and leaving his companion, with an exclamation of joy and astonishment, was in an instant at the side of Emily.

"Thank God! at last I have met you, Miss Lawrenson," he cried eagerly. "Where—where have you concealed yourself? I have sought in town and country, in vain endeavouring to trace your retreat.—But what do I see?" he continued, as she slowly turned her averted face towards him, and he read the melancholy story that sickness and grief had too plainly written there: "you have been ill—very, very ill; and even now—oh! say that you are better, dear Miss Lawrenson; say that you are recovering. We all feel deeply, deeply interested in you.—But in my joy at meeting you, I have forgotten to introduce you to one whom I am sure you will love: Laura, this is Miss Lawrenson—Miss Lawrenson, Mrs. Ormonde."

An icy chillness crept through the blood of poor Emily, and she trembled so violently as she coldly returned the cordial greeting of Mrs. Ormonde, that had it not been that she held firmly by her support, she must have fallen.

"I am better—I am nearly well, I thank you," she said, in a constrained voice, in answer to Ormonde's inquiries, as she endeavoured hastily to pass on. What!

—what was this fresh torture that was inflicted to try the force of her determination? Wherefore this cruel mockery—this new, this refined insult? His memory could not have been so steeped in Lethe that he had forgotten all that had passed between them; all those scenes the portraiture of which had made the past a blank to all besides; that he should still assume the specious mask of interest and affection for her, and, at the same time, present to her eyes the unconscious weapon that had stabbed her to the heart.

She hoped that she had escaped him, when he again joined her.

“Why—why is this, Miss Lawrenson?” he inquired in a broken tone: “why am I thus constantly, thus pointedly avoided? It cannot be that the cherished remembrance of a few petulant words can have called for this constant display of dislike, of abhorrence. Nor, I hope, will the feverish desire of again meeting you, that constantly excited, and constantly disappointed, has made the last year one of misery to me, be considered as a new offence. Why then——”

“Colonel Ormonde is the undoubted master of his own actions,” interrupted Emily, speaking very slow. “I have neither the wish to control nor to judge him; all that I claim is an equal right not to be interrupted, not to be insulted.”

“By heavens! this is too much,” cried Henry: “hate

me, accuse me, and I can justify myself, but this cold disdain is unbearable.”

“To accuse would be to claim some authority; to hate would be to cherish the memory of some injury: there is nothing of either intimacy or connexion between Colonel Ormonde and myself to justify the one, or to make the other necessary. Shall I request you, sir, to allow me to pass you?” she said, as he endeavoured to detain her.

“One word—one word and I have done. When, in mercy, tell me, when was it that this injury, this insult was involuntarily the cause of my becoming so loathed in your sight? You know how I once loved you; far, far more do I love you now.”

She shuddered, and drawing herself up, she proudly said, “The character of Colonel Ormonde never before was so low in my estimation as at this moment. Never did I imagine that any man would outrage a lonely and unprotected woman, with the humiliating declaration of an affection that he knows he never felt; and which, had he ever felt it, a witness was at hand, the most damning, the most clear to prove his falsehood.”

“Now you become wholly unintelligible. That some unintentional offence has made me odious and despicable in your eyes, alas! appears too plain; but why my sister, who never knew you till this instant, should——”

“Who—who!” inquired Emily, with a vehemence that affrighted Ormonde.

“My sister—my sister-in-law, at least; my brother Horace’s wife. Was it not her to whom you alluded?”

“There—there!” she cried, pointing to Mrs. Ormonde, who had retired to some little distance; “she whom I saw on your arm but now—she whom I saw——” and she shuddered, and paused at the recollection of the wedding scene.

“Is my brother’s wife; they were married the day that you were so ill at Bentley, and when you——”

“And you—were you not there? did I not see you come forth with her upon your arm, your eyes beaming upon hers?”

“Is it possible that you can have imagined that I was married? Oh, Miss Lawrenson! how lightly have you esteemed my love, my devotion: I might have died under your hatred, your contempt; but never could the heart that had once been engraven with your image bear the impress of another.”

“Great God, I thank you!” cried Emily, as her senses for a moment failed, and she fell—no, not to the ground this time, but to the haven of her rest, the refuge from all her sorrows—the arms of her adored.

As she recovered she feared that her brain was still disordered, for plainly she saw two Henry Ormondes, one the shadow of the other.

She glanced wildly from one to the other, and almost believed that the whole scene was but a dream.

“This is my brother,” said an agitated voice close beside her; “you will not now, I trust, refuse to encourage the ready friendship that he and his wife offer you.”

She turned her eyes again to the countenance of him who had addressed her—oh! there was one look there that she never *ought* to have mistaken; perplexed, overwhelmed with joy and surprise, and grasping the hand of her fancied rival, she laid her head upon her shoulder and burst into tears.

The mystery is now easily explained. Henry and his brother Horace were twins, and the resemblance between them was so extraordinary, that their nearest and dearest friends could hardly distinguish them when apart. Hence the protracted misery that had reduced our poor heroine to the verge of the grave. The imperfect view that she had caught of Horace both in the street at Ashton, and subsequently at his wedding, had completely deceived her; and the circumstance of the ceremony having been postponed until Harry could be present at the solemnization of his brother’s marriage had confirmed her idea of having been witness to her lover’s perfidy by the presence of Fido, and the coincidence of the mention made of his name. She had never heard of the likeness between these two Antipholises, and indeed hardly knew that the object of her affection had a brother, for Horace had lived chiefly in the

country with his uncle. Why prolong a now uninteresting narrative? Harry had never been, and it did not appear at all probable that he ever would be, false. Happiness, that best of physicians, that most effective tonic of the nerves, soon restored Emily to even greater beauty than formerly.

Dr. Lawrenson arrived at Mrs. Hamerton's to perform a certain ceremony, at which the good aunt appeared, by proper assistance, at least ten years younger than she had done for twenty years before, and settled the whole of her fortune upon Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ormonde. The old lady has for some years been at rest, and I dare say many of my readers may often have met the proverbially attached Colonel and Mrs. Ormonde in society without ever suspecting that the adventures of their younger days were sufficiently romantic to form the subject of a Tale in an Annual.





THE EARTHQUAKE.

A RHAPSODY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DREAMS OF THE LAND AND SEA."

How strange is human pride! The very globe which we inhabit is but a speck in the immense expanse of the creation, invisible from the first fixed star—that star, a speck to us in bulk is to our sun as Andes to an ant-hill. What then are we? Hast thou ever stood upon the brow of some high mountain, reader? Hast thou ever gazed, thence, over the summits of a hundred rival peaks, over a hundred plains, a hundred valleys, all, from thy lofty station, reduced before the eye to gentle undulations, fading into the blue distance, commingling with the skies? Let us ascend the beetling Catskill. What is that little glistening object, standing in the centre of one of those yellow spots that chequer the low grounds, down by yon curving rivulet, like a solitary pawn on its square on the chess-board. That rivulet is a mighty river—the pride of a mighty sove-

reignty—the highway of the commerce of nations ; that glistening object is the palace of a wealthy citizen ; those yellow spots his multitude of farms, on which is based his power. Men, as he passes, raise the hat and bow the head to him ; senates have hung, attentive on his speech ; he is a magnate of the land : admired and envied, hated and be-praised, a mover of the millions, and a prince among his fellows. Proud, among nobles, he lifts his stately brow ; yet here we look down upon many sovereignties ; palaces, and hamlets, not by tens or hundreds, but by thousands, lie noteless at our feet, lost in the general mass of the vast forest, or the broad green of interminable meadows, on the brown and yellow lichen-covered mountain sides, abrupt and savage, or beneath the soft ethereal veil of distance ; here Galileo's tube that drew the stars from the far heavens but barely shows the hall of wealth, the hovel of the poor, like freckles on the beautiful face of nature, reposing in her majesty. Wipe out those yellow spots, let that glistening object be fired to light, on his way to havoc, some invader with his band of emmets, whom men call heroes, *if successful* :—let it sink in ashes—let the broad mantle of the forest flow over and absorb that multitude of farms, as the waves of time shall roll over the memory of their possessors :—say, wouldst thou miss this microscopic greatness ? Would the light of its expiring flame redden this towering eminence above the earthborn mists through which

all things appear, below, 'enlarged by the obscurity around; "men like trees walking"—spiritual things like giant shadows, vague! Here, where we look up to God, through a clear sky, how mean appear the little mounds of brick and marble, the narrow boundaries of territorial rights, when we compare the loftiest edifice, the broadest excavation with which human power has roughened the mere surface of the earth, with the eternal hills, as they are called by those with whom a few short centuries seem like a limitless duration.

Eternal hills! Fools! can they not read Time's records in the rocks? Gather me up a fragment. What is this? Thou stony monitor, thou wert the prison once of an inhabitant of the vast profound. Thy course was run before man trod the land—*before land was!* Race after race of thy successors lie buried in successive layers, making the earth one vast mausoleum, like to the cemetery of a crowded capital, where generation after generation wipes out the memory of its predecessor, pushes its fathers from their "*final*" beds, and takes their place. Yet each, the youngest of these races, antedates the "eternal hills;" and these, their monuments, commingled with our own, shall long survive when other hills arise from out the unfathomable abyss, and man—his history lost, his only relics stony effigies, dug by perhaps superior beings, from the soil—may point another, a moral on eternity.

We sit vibrating between the eternal elements of fire and water, upon the half-hardened crust of a young world—the conflict of chemical elements struggling perpetually for an exit from the deep central cave of incandescent lava. Gases accumulate; a portion of the solid surface falls into the boiling lake; a wave spreads wide and far through the vulcanean halls—and provinces are shaken, cities lie whelmed beneath the sea, mountains are forced from the bosom of the deep, the noblest monuments of human skill are crumbled into dust, the hopes and lovely sympathies of social life are buried in despair among the broken fragments of desolate hearth-stones. Yet are these vast convulsions mere gentle admonitions, teaching us the instability of all things earthly. The fate of races, nations, individuals, is still the same; the law of this world is eternal change; the only state of being that can claim the high soul's deep respect lies far beyond. How idle then the boast of human greatness! How far more noble is the Christian spirit, which, gazing calmly upon storm and earthquake, can raise its thought to heaven, and truly utter, “None of these things move me!”

THE PRAIRIE WILDS.

BY FAY ROBINSON, ESQ.

I HAVE stood alone in the prairie wilds,
Where the earth was decked in her blandest smiles,
And the winds that o'er the streamlet breathed,
Where the purple flags and the lilies wreathed,
Mingled their scents with the perfumed bay,
Which in evergreen glades around it lay :

When the sun was sinking to his rest,
And slanted his rays o'er the green earth's breast,
And the larks sang out their farewell hymn
To the light which then was waning dim,
And the horned owl flew to the *timber's** edge,
And the frog croaked out from the reedy sedge:

Where, painted on the horizon's lines,
The deer were seen with their branching tines ;
Oh, little they knew of horn and hound,
Though an eager glance they threw around

* A western word for forest.

As they hurried o'er the dewy plain
To hide them in the wood again :

Where the black wolf stole from his fetid bed,
And followed the track the deer had sped,
And the curlew whistled by the lake,
And the mock-bird answered from the brake,
And an Indian hunter alone passed o'er
The vale where his fathers were tombed of yore.

Strange were the thoughts which filled my breast
As I threw me on the ground to rest.
And I laughed aloud at the cark and care
Which worldlings in their bosoms bear ;
How they grovel and howl in the crowded mart,
And scorning nature, are slaves to art.

And I wept to think, like a magic wand,
The finger of art would change the land ;
That the stream which shone like molten gold
O'er its pebbly bed as it bubbling rolled,
Must cease some day its joyous trill,
And shape its course to man's rude will.

That the purple flags would pass away,
Be torn from the earth the scented bay,
That the mighty trees whose branches hung
Above the stream must bow them down,

That the deer and hunter hence must roam
To the far-off hills for a quiet home.

And I doubted much if earth was made
For man alone, as his children said ;
If the wolf which howled in his lonely glen,
If the fox that stole from his rocky den,
If the deer that swiftly hurried by,
Nature had formed alone to die.

If but to man 'tis given to grasp
At each earthly bliss as it hurries past,
And alone to seek in the world above,
The crowning cup of its heavenly love ;
If God from whose hands the ravens feed
The lot of each creature does not heed.

THE SPARTAN MOTHER.

BY MRS. FREDERICK SUTTON.

SHE knelt, she raised the lifeless head,
Wildly she gazed on the clouded eye ;
Its light was gone,—her son was dead !
He died as a Spartan loved to die,
He fell in the hour of victory !
His heavy curls of silken hair
Fell on her arm all listlessly,
Save when the breeze came wandering there,
And stirred one tress, in mockery,
'Twould seem, of her wild agony.
For though she wept not o'er her child,
Her last fair boy, her loveliest,
And though she even proudly smiled,
As his warm life-blood stained her breast,
And trickled down her broided vest,—
Yet that brief smile, spoke it of bliss ?
No !—dark revenge and pride were there,
Struggling with the deep tenderness

Of woman's love, that floweret fair,
That blooms in joy, but withers in despair.
That bitter smile soon passed away ;
Her proud lip quivered, and a tear
Rose to the lash, and dimmed the ray
Of that dark eye so wild and clear.
'Twas but an instant ere she dashed
Away the rebel drop ; the fire
Rekindled in her eye, and flashed
More brightly forth ! Once more she pressed
Her bleeding warrior to her breast ;
Then to her feet she wildly sprung,
And thus her last farewell she sung :—

“ Thou art free, thou art free, my warrior son !
Thou hast nobly fought, thy task is done !
Nobly, thy father's sword thou'st wielded ;
Nobly, for Sparta, thy life hast yielded.
Not a tear for thee shall moisten mine eye,
Though my heart should burst in its agony !
Thou hast fallen as thy fathers, before thee, fell,
In the arms of victory :—brave one, farewell !
When with trembling hands I gave thee thy shield,
And bade thee return on it, rather than yield,
I saw, by the glance of that sparkling eye,
Thou would'st bravely conquer, or proudly die.

The last sight of thine eye was the foe on his knee,
The last sound in thine ear was the shout of the free,
Thou hast fought, thou hast conquered; thy task is done :
Farewell ! thou art free, my warrior son !”

THE BLACK DE BOURGHO.

AN IRISH LEGEND.

BY J. HOUSTON BROWNE.

ON a dark and stormy night in the winter of 1333, two persons in the garb of *woodkernes*, or natives, quitted the postern gate of the priory of Hollywood, on the shore of the bay of Belfast, and took their way towards the beach. An eastern wind swept in from the precipitous headlands which bounded the "lough," creating a heavy sea, and causing the waves to break upon the shore with a deep echoing noise. The night-travellers walked hastily among the mazes of the thick oak wood, which extended down to the sea, and exchanged no word till they stood over a little creek in which a rude *curragh*, or boat of wicker-work covered with skin, lay moored in the shelter of the trees.

"Drag out the curragh, MacNial Oge," said one, "and see that there be no fowlers abroad on the beach. 'Twere ill for it to be known to-morrow that the priory servants had a part in the work of to-night."

"There is little fear of fowlers abroad in such a storm," said his companion, "it is bad shooting with a wet bow-string."

"Then steer for Carrickfergus," said the first speaker, as he took his place in the boat which MacNial Oge had unmoored. "There shall be strange news, ere the morning, of the black De Bourgho."

MacNial Oge shoved off from the shore. A few strokes of the oars brought them out of the shelter of the land, and their little vessel was rising and falling on the short waves of the lough. The breeze was adverse, and the spray ever and anon broke over the boat and drenched its occupants, although they were making scarcely any headway. Still, however, MacNial pulled lustily at the oars, and his companion held the rudder in his hand. In this manner they toiled against the wind and the rising tide, the storm every moment becoming fiercer, and the lightning beginning to sweep through the atmosphere, flash following flash in quick succession. At length a blue-forked brand swept past, almost before the eyes of the rowers, followed by a long, sharp roll of thunder.

"Jesu Maria ! Con O'Hanlon," said MacNial, "wilt thou not turn from this attempt to-night, when the Virgin herself seems to be against us ? There are those in the castle of Carrickfergus, who will do their work all the better without our presence."

“ ’Tis lest their work should be done too well that I am here to join them,” replied O’Hanlon. “Think’st thou, man, that I should now be tossing on Garmoyle in a crazy curragh, with the blue lightning sweeping about mine ears, without a good cause for my journey?”

His companion made no reply, but took again to his oars.

William, Earl of Ulster, whom O’Hanlon denominated “the black De Bourgho,” was at the period of which we write the principal enemy with whom the northern Irish chieftains had to contend. The failure of the expedition of Edward Bruce, brother of King Robert of Scotland, had left a large portion of Antrim debateable ground, and De Bourgho, Earl of Ulster, had seized upon Carrickfergus. Many attempts had been made to dislodge the Saxon settlers by the O’Kanes, MacQuillans, and O’Neills, but without success. The Earl had his residence in the castle of Carrickfergus, where his Countess and an only child resided with him. He was a brave and warlike man, and brought both superior skill and weapons to defend his colony against the assaults of the natives. The natural consequence of his being hemmed in upon all sides by the Irish, however, was, that his followers became intermingled with them by marriages and other ties, and at length some of his own domestics leant strongly towards the neighbouring chiefs in their affection, although out-

wardly they owed their fealty to the Earl. To suborn these to the interests of O'Kane of Doon-y-even, or Dungiven, was found to be a matter of comparatively easy performance, and accordingly a conspiracy was set on foot in his own household for the assassination of De Bourgho.

Con O'Hanlon, who with his companion made his way across the bay towards Carrickfergus, was a young chieftain who held his lands from the holy brotherhood of Hollywood Priory, on the condition of doing battle for their rights when they were assailed, an event of frequent occurrence in Ireland in the fourteenth century.

O'Hanlon had succeeded his father in the lands of the monks, and being brought up in the neighbourhood of the priory, the fathers had imparted to him such an education as comported with the lay condition to know. He was consequently superior to his fellow-chieftains in many respects, and possessed a chivalrous spirit known to few of the Irish at that early period.

It happened that O'Hanlon had been one evening fishing in the bay some months before the night upon which our story opens, when his companions descried a party, among which were women, leaving De Bourgho's castle, and straying along the beach. The careless group had no sooner been discovered by the Irish, than it was resolved to intercept them should they allow the twilight to set in during their walk. With this

intention they lay upon their oars, and watched their intended victims leave gradually behind them the protecting presence of the strong castle of De Bourgho.

The English, unconscious of their danger, continued their walk until the growing darkness warned them that they should return to the castle. They retraced their steps for some distance accordingly, and had almost half-way returned, when a low whistle was given upon the beach, and they found themselves surrounded with armed men. The fishing party had cautiously approached the shore, and succeeded in their design of intercepting them. When they first made their appearance to the affrighted group, three of De Bourgho's soldiers, who had accompanied his lady and her attendants, attempted to give battle, but the number of their opponents was too great, and after a short struggle the whole party were made prisoners. Nothing could exceed the joy of the Irish at the success of their design, and many projects for the conveyance of the prisoners, in their limited number of boats, were mooted by different members of their rude council. Each, however, was liable to some fatal objection, until at length one of the savage *kernes* suggested murder. O'Hanlon held a short paddle in his hand, which he had been recently using in his boat, and a stroke from that weapon, which felled him to the earth, was the only reply that greeted the author of the proposal.

The three soldiers were left bound hand and foot on the beach, and the females embarked in the curraghs. O'Hanlon assisted in rowing the one which contained the Countess, and had given instructions to his companion in an under tone, at the moment of their leaving the shore. The effect of these instructions was soon visible, for as the night advanced, and the darkness grew more intense, the distance betwixt the curragh of O'Hanlon and those of his fellows became wider and wider, until at length by some secret and preconcerted signal, both rowers at once lay upon their oars, and the strong breeze drifted them swiftly up the bay.

They were soon in the still water, beneath the castle of De Bourgho, and pulling lightly and silently to the shore; and the moment the boat touched the sand, O'Hanlon told its fair occupants that they were at liberty, and assisted them to land. He then pushed off without staying for speech, and made way quickly along the beach; till running at length upon the shore, he struck his sword through the wicker-work and hide of which the curragh was composed. The water gurgled up through the breach, and she quickly filled and sank.

The two Irish were now without the means of taking again to the bay, and stood deliberating with each other how to proceed. De Bourgho's followers, they knew, must ere now have marked the delay of the Countess's party, and were, no doubt, scouring the country in all

directions in pursuit. Their chief care, then, was to keep clear of any of these searching parties, and with this purpose, they determined to take the most unfrequented paths through the woods. They had scarcely started, however, through the forest, with this determination, when the moon, which had been for some hours struggling with a heavy atmosphere, burst brightly through, and revealed the face of the bay, the dark pine-covered mountains, and the castle of Carrickfergus in the distance. And it revealed more than these. A party of the followers of De Bourgho had marked the approach of the curragh to the beach, and the moment they could recognise in the moonlight the Irish garb of its late occupants, a shower of arrows saluted them, one of which lodged in the arm of MacNial Oge. The fugitives had no time to think of how they should act ; for the English had no sooner discharged their arrows, than they rushed in upon them ; and as O'Hanlon and his follower attempted to defend themselves, they were struck down from behind, and made prisoners, and lodged in the keep of De Bourgho's castle.

The Lady De Bourgho slept that night for but a short space, and when the morning broke, the prisoners were gone. The rage of the lord of the castle was beyond all control ; but his only remedy was to slay the sentinels, and to digest his grief.

Return we now to the night on which O'Hanlon and

MacNial Oge tossed upon the bay on their way to Carrickfergus Castle. In spite of storm and lightning, hard pulling at the oars drove the light bark through the water. Their progress was slow, and only achieved with great toil ; but their efforts were crowned at length by success, as the curragh, about two hours after midnight, ran into the creek at which O'Hanlon had liberated the Countess some months before. The darkness of night had been favourable to their approach to the castle ; for although four warders paced its battlements, no alarm had been given of their approach. O'Hanlon on reaching the creek, did not land, but putting MacNial Oge on shore, and telling him to "keep a wakeful ward," he pulled slowly and silently, into the spot where the deep still water washed the dark walls of the castle.

On the day preceding that particular evening, an Irish *senach* or harper had arrived at the castle on a journey throughout the district, wherein he exercised his musical vocation. His visit was a welcome one to the inmates of the mansion, and especially to such as were of the native Irish tribes, and the Earl himself had permitted him to be brought into the banquet-hall, after the fashion of the native chiefs.

The capacious apartment which formed the banquet-hall of De Bourgho's castle, presented a cheerful appearance about the hour at which O'Hanlon shot his boat under the shadow of the walls. The English earl

had relaxed from the pride which marked the Norman race, of which he sprung, and gave a loose to the reveling of his Irish retainers. Seated at the head of the old oak table, with his casque and corselet laid aside, and stout blade leaning against the wainscot, he sent round the usquebaugh and sack with an air of hospitality that would not have disgraced a descendant of Milesius. Two great wood-fires blazed in the wide chimneys of the hall, and a number of lamps lighted the apartment, reflecting their lustre from helmets and platejacks, and all the machinery of war ranged around the walls.

The harper had not been allowed much cessation from his labours, and his extemporaneous ballads had been recited both in praise of the Norman and the Irish nobles. As the night advanced, and the revelry became more tumultuous, however, he reverted more frequently to the latter theme, singing of

“ Nial of the pledges nine,”

and all his warlike successors, the sons of Heremon and Ir. At length, when the revel was at its height, the earl himself demanded a legendary song. The old senach took the harp, and casting a meaning glance toward the circle of woodkerne, who had gathered around him, he bent over the instrument, and striking its cords sang thus—

The warden paces the seaward tower,
All at the break of day,
Where the morning mists from the waters rise,
And roll in clouds away.

What ships are these on the rolling sea,
That greet the watcher's view ?
With their gilded prows to the castle turned,
The white foam dashing through.

They come not from the Scottish shore,
Across the northern main ;
They come not from McDonnell's isles,
Nor the sunny land of Spain :

Their load is not of Spanish wine,
Nor of the Eastern woof ;
But their decks are filled with mail-clad men,
And flash with helms of proof.

On every deck shines a stout plate-jack,
And waves the Norman plume,
And they spring to the shores of Innisfail
Bringing slavery and doom.

Our bravest fall before their blades ;
Our mightiest are laid low ;
The race of our kings was loyal once,
Their sons ! where are they now ?

In exile or in bondage foul,
The chain is on each neck,
And servants to De Lacy we,
Or the De Bourgho black !

The earl had marked the excitement which the harper's lay was gradually producing among his servants, and would have stopped the singer, had he not himself requested the song. At length, as the old man ended, looks so threatening were cast towards him, that he bethought him of seizing his sword. He had scarcely moved from his seat for this purpose, however, when the old harper sprang to his feet, and pointing towards the earl, exclaimed, " Vengeance for the death of Mac Guillamore !" In an instant a deafening cry filled the apartment, and all the Irish drew their daggers and rushed upon the Earl. De Bourgho sprang towards the wainscot, and had just laid hand upon his rapier, when the stab of an Irish skeine almost severed his neck, and he rolled over upon the floor of the hall, writhing in death. The thirst, however, of his savage murderers was not yet satisfied, for one skeine after another was plunged into his body, until it would have been difficult to have recognised in the ensanguined mass which lay at the feet of the kerne, the features of William De Bourgho, the " comely " Earl of Ulster.

At the death of the Earl, another fiendish cheer rang through the arched roofs of the old castle, and the murderers rushed along the halls and corridors, and took

possession of the strength. Meantime, an English domestic had escaped to the chamber of the Countess, and warned her of the proceedings in the hall. What resistance could she make, however, to the infuriated multitude? She and her maids swung the door of the hall which approached her chamber close, and drawing in the bolts, retired to abide their fate.

A new adventure, however, awaited them. They had just returned to the chamber, when the window which looked out upon the bay, and through which the newly risen moon had been streaming her light, was suddenly darkened, and wrenching aside the iron bars, O'Hanlon sprang into the apartment. "Fly, Lady De Bourgho!" he exclaimed, "the bloodhounds who murdered the Earl are at the door of thy chamber. Trust to me! a stout rope swings from this window to my boat. It was placed there and the bars cut through by treachery; but now it shall answer a more noble purpose."

"And shall I fly with one reeking from the murder of my husband? Do thy will, hell-hound! spare none here, for life is now worth but little."

At this moment a loud sound, as of the blows of a ponderous hammer, commenced at the door of the chamber.

"Fly! for the sake of the Mary mother, fly!" exclaimed O'Hanlon, seizing the Countess round the waist, and dragging her to the window. He had caught hold of the rope, and was about to commit himself and

his now insensible burden to it, when a loud crash announced that the chamber door had fallen before the battering-ram of its assailants. O'Hanlon dropped from the window, and committed himself to the rope. He had scarcely half way descended, however, when a bright light shone on the walls of the castle and the water beneath. He looked hurriedly upwards, and there an awful sight greeted him. From the window in which his rope was fastened, gleamed a torch of bogwood, throwing its red light on the demoniac features of an Irish kerne. A cold perspiration broke upon O'Hanlon, and his hands almost unloosed their hold.

"They are escaping by a rope, and we are foiled," exclaimed the kerne above.

"Then for what use is a skeine in thy belt, fool?" replied the voice of the harper.

The rope quivered for a moment in the hands of O'Hanlon—it separated above, and a dashing noise, as of the fall of a heavy body into the water, resounded the next moment along the walls of the castle. O'Hanlon struggled for a moment with the waves, but his companion had grasped his arms, and after an ineffectual and agonized struggle, they sank. The next tide left high upon the beach the bodies of O'Hanlon and the ill-fated Countess of Ulster.

HOW SHALL I WOO HER?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LILLIAN."

L'on n'aime bien qu'une seule fois : c'est la premiere. Les amours qui suivent sont moins involontaires!

LA BRUYERE.

I.

How shall I woo her?—I will stand
Beside her when she sings;
And watch that fine and fairy hand
Flit o'er the quivering strings:
And I will tell her I have heard,
Though sweet her song may be,
A voice, whose every whispered word
Was more than song to me!

II.

How shall I woo her?—I will gaze,
In sad and silent trance,
On those blue eyes, whose liquid rays
Look love in every glance:

And I will tell her, eyes more bright,
Though bright her own may beam,
Will fling a deeper spell to-night
Upon me in my dream.

III.

How shall I woo her?—I will try
The charms of olden time,
And swear by earth and sea and sky,
And rave in prose and rhyme ;—
And I will tell her, when I bent
My knee in other years,
I was not half so eloquent,—
I could not speak for tears !

IV.

How shall I woo her?—I will bow
Before the holy shrine ;
And pray the prayer, and vow the vow,
And press her lips to mine :
And I will tell her, when she parts
From passion's thrilling kiss,
That memory, to many hearts
Is dearer far than bliss.

V.

Away ! away ! the chords are mute,
The bond is rent in twain ;

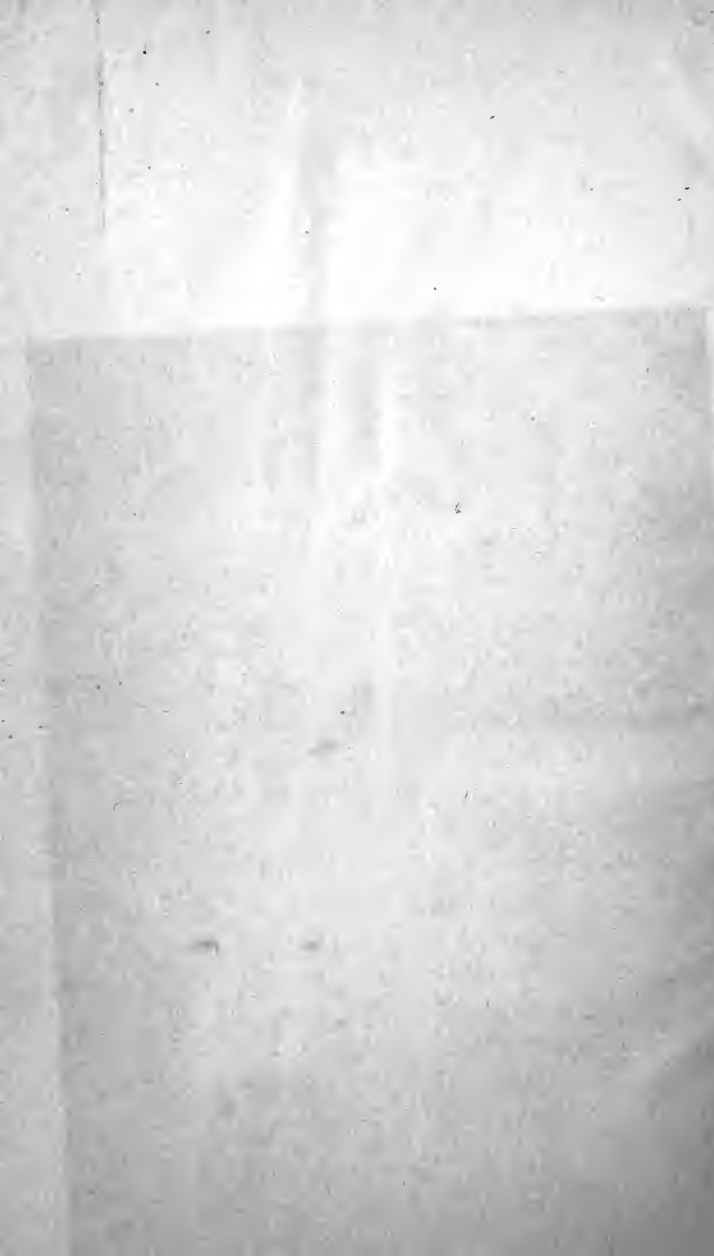
You cannot wake that silent lute,
Nor clasp those links again :
Love's toil I know is little cost,
Love's perjury is light sin ;
But souls that lose what I have lost,—
What have they left to win ?

THE END.









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